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ABSTRACT

This British collection of essays on intensive second language instruction is divided into four groups. A section on intensive courses outside Britain includes: "Intensive Courses in a German Youth Hostel"; "Intensive German from an Austrian Perspective: An LEA Initiative"; and "Integrating Intensive Sessions into the Sixth Form Curriculum." Papers on bilingual and immersion education include: "Goff's School, Hertfordshire"; "Mill Hill School, London"; "Heathside School, Surrey: Birth of a Section Bilingue"; "An Experiment: Cookery in French"; "'Immersion' in Canada and Wales: A Background Note"; and "A Case History from Wales." A group on intensive courses at local centers includes: "Intensive Foreign Language Courses in Hertfordshire"; "'Immersion' in the European Resources Centre in Leicestershire"; "An Intensive French Course for Underachievers"; "Intensive Courses at Burwell House, Cambridgeshire"; "Peers School, Oxford: Three Possible Patterns"; "Lancashire College, Chorley"; "Intensive Teaching in Kingston-upon-Thames"; and "Building Intensive Days into the Curriculum." Essays on cooperative programs linking teacher training and schools include: "Building Bridges: Intensive Language Teaching in Partnership"; "Intensive Days for Schools: Using Student Teachers at Goldsmiths"; and "Training Teachers for Intensive Teaching: The Sheffield Experience." A concluding essay looks at future directions. A list of resources and a bibliography are appended. (MSE)

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INTENSIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

INITIATIVES AT
SCHOOL LEVEL

EDITED BY
ERIC HAWKINS

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Edited by Eric Hawkins



CENTRE FOR INFORMATION ON LANGUAGE TEACHING AND
RESEARCH

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FOREWORD

Alan Moys
CILT

CILT's first book on this theme, *Intensive language teaching in schools*, was published ten years ago, in 1978. A decade later, in 1988, there may seem to have been relatively little major change in the patterns or extent of intensive language teaching in our schools. There has been no expansion of *sections bilingues*, though there are significant new initiatives in one or two areas and a continuing development of the commitment in individual schools which figured in our 1978 survey. It has, nonetheless, to be said that the 'drip feed' approach to language teaching, scorned by Harry Rée and others in the late seventies, is still very much the way in which language programmes are delivered in schools.

However, the last ten years have in other ways decisively confirmed the principles and approaches adopted by the contributors to our 1978 edition. Now that the lack of clarity about objectives and the depression about inappropriate methods at that time have given way to a new sense of direction and a renewed optimism among language teachers, it is opportune, in introducing this volume, to refer back to George Perren's analysis, in the original foreword, of what characterises intensivity - an analysis which has proved to be startlingly prophetic. He suggested that probably the most significant feature of intensive language teaching was *the use of the foreign language for some other purpose than merely learning it*. We all know that this principle has become central to recommended teaching approaches in the 1980s.

How gratifying it is, too, that ten years on, and almost ten years into retirement, Eric Hawkins is as young at heart and as enthusiastic as ever for new understandings in the field of language learning and teaching. His likening of the essential frustration of the language teacher trying to impart some French in a 35-minute lesson to *gardening in a gale* has become one of the most often quoted images in professional circles, and an enduring reminder of the insights he has given to teachers and students of languages. He brings to his role of editor of this volume a special blend of understanding and excitement.

CILT couples its thanks to Eric Hawkins with gratitude to the contributors, one or two of whom are reappearing to update notable work which they originally described in our earlier edition.

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INTRODUCTION

Eric Hawkins

Learning a foreign language - a two level process

Recent developments in foreign language teaching methodology make the theme running through this book highly topical. The decade that has elapsed since the original book on this subject appeared has seen growing agreement among theorists that mastering a foreign language under school conditions involves learning activities at two 'levels'. There is less agreement among the theorists, however, when it comes to defining the two kinds of learning.

One definition, offered by Carl Dodson (1978), distinguishes 'medium orientated' activities, directed towards the 'form' (grammatical structure, accuracy of pronunciation, spelling, etc) from activities that are 'message orientated', where the learner concentrates on using the foreign language to transact meanings that matter to him/her. For Dodson, the most effective language learning involves a constant interaction between these two kinds of activity. Each is necessary, neither is sufficient by itself.

Steve Krashen (1981) also distinguishes two cognitive levels: subconscious 'acquisition' *which is the most effective and central means of internalising language for adults as well as children* and conscious 'learning' which involves deliberate use of the 'monitor' to focus on form and check for correctness. Krashen sees consciously learnt rules being stored in the learner's 'monitor', available for such checking but not for 'generating' the foreign language. The terms 'acquisition' and 'learning' are used, also, by Earl Stevick (1982), but he insists that they should not be seen as two discrete levels of learning. The process of getting the foreign language is more complex *...the modes of getting a new language which are available to a student are not exactly two in number. What we have been calling acquisition and learning now become only the ends of a continuum which rests on a single process.* Nevertheless, he stresses the teacher's *urgent need to tell them apart and to exploit both of them* (p 26).

The nuances of difference between the accounts offered by these three widely read theorists are less important than their broad agreement that foreign language learning in school involves the interplay of different levels of cognition*.

*I have tried, in Hawkins 1981 ff et seq., to describe typical learning activities at four stages across Stevick's continuum ranging from 'pure level one' to 'wholly level two' use of language

Introduction

Our reason for introducing a symposium on 'intensive' language teaching with this reminder is that teachers are at present exploring imaginative new ways of engaging their pupils in learning at both levels.

'Level one' (let us call it 'learning') has always had its place. It formed the main constituent of the traditional secondary school course up to 16+. 'Level two' (acquisition) has traditionally been fully experienced only by those who went on beyond 16+ to use the foreign language **for their own purposes** in motivated reading and/or in study abroad. The search is now on for ways of making 'level one' activities more imaginative, as part of 'awareness of language', while bringing 'level two' activities within reach of all learners. It is in the context of this search for new forms of 'level two' activity that the accounts of 'intensive teaching' in this symposium are offered.

A lesson from the past

It may not be an irrelevant digression to remind the reader that the distinction we start from, between two levels of learning, is not new. It was clearly recognised in the heyday of the Tudor Grammar School, one period when a second language was successfully taught in our schools.

The language was Latin, the *lingua franca* of all educated men in Europe and beyond, the key to all advancement in church or state. The Grammar School's business was to teach Latin. There was no room for failure and the method adopted recognised the two 'levels' discussed above.

There was the daily 'grammar' class in which the structure of the language was expounded (and often beaten into the pupils!) but this was supplemented by 'level two' activity. Pupils were expected to **use** Latin for all purposes, once the rudiments had been learned, just as Montaigne (1533-92) and his brothers had been compelled by an enlightened father to use only Latin in the nursery (Montaigne 1580).

The royal charters of the Grammar Schools left teachers no option on this. The charter of King James Grammar School, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, as late as 1657, is typical. It stipulated that after the first three years in the school *any boy caught using English, even in the playground, was to be beaten by the Headmaster*. The textbooks produced by the great Bohemian educator Comenius (1592-1671) such as the *Janua Linguarum Reserata* (Gate of Tongues Unlocked) published in London in 1631 or the *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (Picture of the Visible World) (English edition 1659) were intended to be used outside the narrow limits of the classroom. The *Orbis Pictus* has on each page a wood-cut illustrating some everyday activity (playground games, brewing ale, haymaking, etc) for which the Latin vocabulary and specimen dialogues are provided (with numbered references to detail in the illustrations). (See Hawkins 1981, p 106)

It was recognised that, though the daily 'grammar grind' might be necessary, pupils could not be expected to learn to use Latin without constant practice, motivated by engaging in activities that interested them. (But see, on the practicalities of this, our note in Appendix A p 149). When Latin ceased to be the *lingua franca* of educated people (Isaac Newton was the last English

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scientist to publish his *magnum opus* in Latin in 1687) 'level two' activity of this kind was no longer possible. Only the 'grammar grind' was left - necessary but not sufficient.

When, in the 19th century, modern languages began to challenge for a place in the curriculum, they adopted a methodology which had forgotten the 'level two' strategy of an earlier age, a strategy deemed practicable only so long as Latin was commonly in use by the community outside school.

It has taken a long time, but 'level two' modern language learning is at last awakening from its century long sleep. Imaginative teachers are now discovering how to make available to all (or most) pupils the kind of 'level two' language activity that Comenius took for granted.

'Level one' learning and 'awareness of language'

Because of the constraints within which they work (four or five short lessons per week, large classes, 'gardening in the gale of English', etc) FL teachers have always found it easier to engage pupils in 'level one' learning (concentrating on structure, accuracy of written forms, etc) than on 'acquisition' (level two).

It is true that too often, in the past, 'learning' tended to become an arid process and 'grammar' got a bad name. It need not have done. Recently new approaches to grammar have been proposed making the study of structure an imaginative and revealing exploration of 'how language works', starting from the pupil's own observations and perceptions.

The best of these approaches have linked the pupil's 'voyage of exploration' into the grammar of the foreign language with the rest of the 'language education' offered by the curriculum. So, in fruitful collaboration with teachers of English, of Latin and other subjects such as history, music and biology, foreign language teachers are finding ways of making the exploration of, say, French grammar part of the pupil's growing 'awareness of language'. (For a stimulating example of the new approach see Barry Jones, *How language works*, CUP 1984; c.f. also Hawkins 1987, p 138 et seq.) It is clear that grammar, conceived in this new way, as a voyage of discovery, an inductive process taking always as its starting point language familiar to the learner, is now back, centre stage, as a necessary, though never sufficient, element in effective foreign language learning. In exploiting this inductive approach to grammar, teachers are, in fact, rediscovering a truth that will be familiar to those who have studied the history of foreign language teaching methods. Otto Jespersen (1904) advocated what he called 'inventional grammar', the creation by the learner of his own 'rules' induced from close observation of the foreign language. The idea had been frequently discussed in the 'great debate' of 100 years ago. Jespersen observes that the great Henry Sweet himself had 'poured scorn' on the idea but had then gone on to advocate something very similar himself (Jespersen 1904, p 133). As so often in our discipline, history seems to repeat itself. We can have little doubt that one of the lines along which foreign language teaching is set to make progress in the coming decade is the discovery of imaginative ways of heightening pupils' awareness of 'how language works' (both mother tongue and

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foreign language) through fruitful collaboration between teachers 'across the curriculum'.

This is not the place, however, to pursue this 'level' of language learning, essential as it is for mastery of language at anything but the most elementary stage and especially in the written form. Our concern, in this symposium, is with 'level two' activities, with the end of the continuum that Stevick and others have called 'acquisition'.

The language teacher is now challenged to do two things:

- a. to understand clearly what is meant by 'level two' learning;
- b. to find ways of engaging in 'level two' activities those pupils who hitherto did little more than transact the foreign language in mechanical ways, concentrating on 'form' and accuracy, seldom using it to express meanings that mattered.

Defining 'level two' learning

Teachers anxious to offer their pupils learning activities at the 'level two' end of the continuum have been frustrated in two ways. One constraint has been the obvious one of the traditional timetable. Meeting a class of 30 pupils four times a week (or perhaps twice a week only if lessons are all 'doubles') the teacher has little chance to engage each individual pupil in dialogue in the language for more than half a minute in each 40 minutes, or two minutes on average in each week. C J Dodson (1967) worked out that one year's contact with the foreign language in school corresponded roughly with one week of contact in the natural first language environment.

To ways of escaping from this constraint, the main theme running through the work described in this book, we return shortly. But first we should briefly consider the teacher's other difficulty which is that discussion of 'level two' has been marked by a certain degree of muddle.

One definition offered, that 'acquisition' is essentially a subconscious by-product of language use, contrasting with deliberate 'learning' which focuses on form, accuracy, etc, breaks down when we try to apply it to the written form. When I sit down to write in the foreign language, or when I seek to get the meaning from a text whose meaning matters to me, I have time to employ a variety of strategies. I can pause and look up a word in the dictionary. I can even run through the paradigm of a verb in my mind or go back and correct a gender. All this is typical 'monitor' activity. Yet it is put at the service of creative, individual use of the language. The cut-off point where 'learning' stops and 'acquisition' begins, at least in acquiring reading and writing skills, seems far from clear.

Another definition, perhaps borrowed from writings on EFL/ESL, is that 'level two' is 'communicative' activity. But this does not capture the essence of 'level two'. Even the pupil waiting his turn to answer in mechanical 'round the class' exchanges about the weather, etc wishes to communicate something, if only the message that he understands the game.

The clue to a more helpful definition is offered by Earl Stevick (1976):

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Other things being equal, the deeper the source of a sentence within the student's personality, the more lasting value it has for learning the language.

The same point was made 60 years ago in a remarkably prescient paper by Otto Tacke, who pointedly borrowed for his title the famous war-cry launched by Viëtor in 1882: *Der Sprachunterricht muß umkehren* (Tacke 1923). For Tacke the essential strategy, to ensure effective learning, was *Ablenkung vom Wort als Selbstzweck* (diverting attention from the word as an end in itself). ... *stets ein Ausdruckswille beim Erlernen fremdsprachlicher Ausdrücke suggeriert wird, sonst haften die fremden Ausdrücke nicht* (a will to mean must always underlie the learning of expressions in the foreign language, otherwise the foreign expressions do not stick).

The *Ausdruckswille* or motivation to use the language to transact the learner's own meanings (not the teacher's or the textbook's) reminds us of the 'will to mean' that lies behind each step forward that the young baby makes in the journey into mastery of the mother tongue. The use of language to satisfy immediately felt needs seems to be the drive behind the baby's apparently effortless (and, as Noam Chomsky remarked, amazingly rapid) grasp of the grammar.

Sadly the apparent slowing down of this drive to transact meanings that matter on the approach of adolescence also seems to explain the 'fossilisation' and impoverishment (relative to others of their peers) of many teenagers' mother tongue competence. It is as if the immediately felt needs that language could satisfy have been met. They no longer feel that language will work for them as it did for the baby. (To the comparable 'plateau' phenomenon of 'fossilisation' in FL acquisition we shall return later.)

The presence or absence, then, of a driving 'will to mean' seems to be the determining factor in language acquisition. We should note that 'meanings that matter' are received as well as expressed. Getting meaning (reading a text to satisfy real interest or to extract information genuinely sought, or following a speaker whose message matters) is no less a 'level two' activity than expressing the learner's own meanings.

Harold Palmer, exactly 70 years ago, in his monumental *Scientific study and teaching of languages* (still required reading for our discipline) reminded us how much of the foreign language we acquire subconsciously from reading/hearing:

Of the vocabulary possessed by any person proficient in the use of a foreign language, a very small proportion has been acquired by conscious study, probably less than 5%; the bulk of his vocabulary has been acquired by subconscious assimilation. (Palmer 1917/1968, p 131).

The 'will to mean/understand' made assimilation seem effortless.

We are not arguing, of course, that 'meaning' plays no part at all in what we have called 'level one' learning activities. It is true that some 'level one' classroom activities which have a proper place may consist entirely of 'non-

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speech acts' (what John Searle 1969 dubbed 'non-serious language'). Examples might be the automatised response to numbers in the foreign language by playing Bingo (*loto*) in class. However, most 'level one' activities will involve transacting 'meanings' of some kind. For example, the traditional exercises of translation (both 'thème' and 'version') which may still have a place at the 'level one' end of the learning continuum, especially with able and mature learners, are very much concerned with the way meanings are transacted in the languages concerned. But whose meanings are they? This is the critical question to ask in categorising activities at the 'level two' end of the continuum. How far is the individual's personal 'will to mean', or 'will to get the meaning' engaged by the activity?

It seems well established that the more the meaning seems to matter to the learner, the more effectively will the new language 'stick'.

Promoting 'level two' learning

If 'level two' is the transaction of meanings that matter to the learner, how can the teacher promote it? In the past the way found has been by the study visit abroad. Provided that good foundations had been laid in the classroom at 'level one' the fortunate few who enjoyed the privilege of the well-prepared study visit made excellent progress. That may eventually be the solution found for many more pupils. In a recent lecture to the Royal Society of Arts Professor Charles Handy asked:

Why could not every child in the Common Market be required to spend one term at the age of fourteen in the school of another country?

A more immediate possibility might be for the EEC, if it means business about European citizenship, to subsidise the exchange between schools, for a term at a time, of carefully chosen teams of pupils (and their teachers).

Pending such enlightened leadership, what can teachers achieve by themselves? The answer is a great deal, as the accounts in this symposium show. 'Level two' immersion need no longer be the privilege of a few. The first step is to build a 'wind-break' against the 'gale of English' that howls at the door of the foreign language classroom. This means organising sessions in such a way that the tender seedlings of new speech patterns in the foreign language have time to establish themselves before being flattened and blighted by the 'gale of English' that will blow as soon as the classroom door opens at the end of the lesson.

Stilling the 'gale of English', however, though a necessary preliminary, is not enough. The teacher still has to find ways of motivating the learner to use the FL **for purposes that matter to him/her**. One could, after all, envisage an intensive course lasting days or even weeks during which nothing but the most arid and mechanical 'level one' language was transacted. What makes prolonged immersion in the FL abroad effective is that the need to survive in the daily round of living ensures that the learner's 'will to mean' is constantly engaged.

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Nevertheless, even prolonged immersion, as with the university student's year abroad, has not always brought results. Research studies have shown that some students, after ten months abroad, had little to show beyond a superficial fluency in the trivial give-and-take of restaurant, bar, disco or games field. They returned even less well equipped to sustain a difficult discussion of any depth in the FL than when they left their home university. Mere immersion had not worked for them.

Earl Stevick has reminded us of

those people who live for ten, twenty or more years in a foreign country conducting their daily affairs in the language of that country - who are, in other words, right in the middle of a genuine acquisition setting - but who persist in the same errors of pronunciation and grammar. Their competence in the language has 'fossilised'... Apparently people acquire as much of a language as they really need for what they really want, but only that much (Stevick 1982, p 26).

Something more than mere immersion is needed, then, for true 'level two' performance. It is motivation to 'do things' with the language. The initiatives described in this book are all, in their different ways, attempts to provide such motivation.

Throughout this symposium our contributors have been encouraged to supply the kind of detail about their experiments that practising teachers will wish to have, and to give a realistic, not a rose-coloured picture. Our purpose is to offer a handbook that is practically useful, while encouraging further positive 'action research'.

PART ONE: INTENSIVE COURSES ABROAD

Teachers of the natural sciences recognise the different but complementary roles of the lecture theatre and the laboratory. Access to the science lab is open to all pupils as part of their course. Running costs, which absorb a large slice of the capitation allowance of every secondary school, are met without question by the administrators.

Contrast the lot of our foreign language teachers. Their real 'language laboratory' (where the pupil can experience 'level two' use of the language - using the language to transact meanings that matter to the learner) is the foreign country.

Access to this laboratory is not open to all. Costs are rarely accepted by LEAs. Thus the necessary 'level two' experience which must complete the classroom apprenticeship is available only to the few.

It was not always so. So long as it was the written language that was studied (and examined!) the real 'language lab' was in the library. There the able and motivated learner could get all the 'immersion' needed in the written language, to complement a thorough grounding at 'level one' in the 16+ examination, and could go on and defend himself/herself with the pen in the exam room.

When, however, examiners began to give a central place to the spoken language (the 'living philology' advocated by Henry Sweet 1899) 'level two' immersion meant going to meet the language where it was spoken, ie. abroad.

The lesson is dawning on administrators that 'level one' learning, in the classroom, though essential, never has been enough to give mastery of the spoken language. Some way must be found to give all learners access to 'immersion', to real swimming in the medium, to complement the 'exercises on the bank' that every swimming instructor knows are necessary but not sufficient.

The accounts of imaginative study visits in this section point the way forward. They are particularly valuable for their reminder that to be maximally effective the study visit abroad requires to be:

- i. meticulously prepared, both within school and in the foreign country;
- ii. motivated by very clearly understood objectives;
- iii. integrated into the rest of the language work and followed up.

INTENSIVE COURSES IN A GERMAN YOUTH HOSTEL

Kathleen Williams
Silverdale School, Sheffield

Mrs Williams is in charge of German at Silverdale School, Sheffield, a maintained comprehensive school serving a relatively prosperous area of the city. It has an excellent academic record at 'O' and 'A' level with substantial Sixth form sets in French and German. Since 1980 Mrs Williams has taken a group of 45 Fifth and Sixth formers for a week to the Youth Hostel in Brodenbach on the river Mosel, to work intensively. In giving this account of that experience Mrs Williams stresses her indebtedness to the language advisor, Peter Eustace, for his support and to the members of her department, especially Alan Lawrence and Jennifer Powell, for their enthusiastic cooperation.

Aims

The course was designed to give a taste of life in Germany, to extend pupils' vocabulary, to improve their comprehension and oral competence, and, above all, to stimulate a desire to communicate in the foreign language and impart the confidence to do so. The demands of new examinations both at 'O' and 'A' levels are causing me to restructure some of our activities but the aims remain the same.

Choice of venue

Since I wanted the first course to take place in February I had to consider the weather factor and the length of the journey. The school exchange was with a town in the Black Forest. That would have been too arduous a journey. Furthermore, I wanted to separate the idea of exchange/holiday from that of an intensive study visit. I wanted a small place where pupils could undertake language assignments in relative safety but one within reach of a larger town which could offer more opportunity for language work without too much distraction. I was hoping to find a venue where the inhabitants might have time and sympathy for our pupils. My last requisite was that it should be an attractive part of Germany, possibly a contrast with the home environment of the pupils. Brodenbach was finally chosen. It is a small village on the bank of the Mosel, set in pretty, wooded landscape in the heart of vineyards 25km from Koblenz and a similar distance from Cochem. It was ideal! In summer the

Intensive courses abroad

village and youth hostel are packed with tourists, but in February there is time and space for us. Over the years we have built up a good rapport with the inhabitants of Brodenbach. They are familiar with the type of work we do and support us. The local hostels welcome our custom at night after the day's work and the local church congregation does not seem to mind an influx of English school children on a Sunday morning. The post office has more time in February to play its part in transactional German and shopkeepers are more likely to have time to encourage their new customers to try out their language skills. The towns of Koblenz and Cochem are also used for our work, but recently we have found that Koblenz is too big, fast and busy for our purposes. Shopping precincts, the railway station, post office and Tourist Information Bureau are all larger, but we found that the inhabitants in the main do not want to be bothered with Fifth/Sixth formers struggling to carry out a language assignment. Cochem, on the other hand, with its picturesque medieval streets, market square and castle, has a much slower pace of life. The town appeals to the pupils not only because the inhabitants are more welcoming, but because it is there that the pupils experience *Kaffe und Kuchen* on the first day after their arrival, an experience which is, of course, very popular.

The youth hostel, too, suits our requirements. During February it is virtually empty and we are able to use all the different day rooms for the various groups and activities. The hostel is warm, modern and attractive, nicely situated in a wood, overlooking the river Mosel and only two minutes' walk from the village. Each year as I leave I book the hostel for the following year because it provides the environment I want for intensive work.

Timing

In February the public examinations are approaching but are not too close; in the remaining months pupils' increased motivation influences both class-work and the final examination result. The choice of February allows time in the school year for the French Exchange at Easter/Whitsuntide and the Boulogne trip at the end of the summer term. The first year I organised the course I scheduled it to take place actually in the February half-term holiday, but it was too exhausting for both pupils and staff to have no break from Christmas to Easter. I managed to get accepted the idea of putting intensive courses in the week prior to the half-term break by appealing, firstly, to the headmaster and then to the advisor. I pointed out that if the LEA wished to support this type of work, permission to arrange for supply teachers would be appreciated. Up to 1986 this was always the case. A problem arose when it was no longer possible to have supply teachers for this purpose. However, the staff agreed to cover for us in 1987 and have, in principle, agreed to do so in 1988. At this point I wish to express my appreciation for the support of the LEA in providing supply teachers and especially to the staff of my school; obviously without cover it would be impossible to run the courses during term time. The decision of the staff to allow the 1987 course to go ahead seemed to us testimony to the value of the work we were doing and we were very appreciative of it.

Setting up the course

The place chosen should, ideally, be visited prior to the course to assess possibilities, and to establish contacts. This is not always possible and often one has to go in 'blind' as I did. The warden of a youth hostel will often supply local names and addresses and a list of amenities in the area and a programme can be sketched out in advance. However, one of the requisites of an intensive course is to capitalise on whatever opportunity offers itself. One year our visit coincided with Carnival time and for one day we re-scheduled all our plans and took part in the festivities in a neighbouring village. Seeing a language potential, wherever it exists, has become the hallmark of our courses and our overall programme is never too rigid that it cannot be changed as the opportunity arises. A local newspaper, for example, wanted to write an article about the course one year. We used the opportunity as a chance for the pupils to act as ambassadors for their school and town and a very fruitful session ensued.

'Selling' the course

Nowadays intensive work abroad is undertaken by many schools, but in 1979 it was a relatively new idea in my area. At first I had to persuade the members of my department that such work was not only possible but beneficial and enjoyable. My colleagues now are as keen as I am and regard the courses as the highlights of the teaching year. Once I had persuaded my department and gained permission from the headmaster and governing body, the next hurdle was to sell the idea to pupils and parents. I outlined my plans in Fifth and Sixth form lessons and sent a letter home inviting parents and pupils to a meeting. Over refreshments I put my proposal forward, showed a short film of Germany including scenes of the area and by the end of the evening I was in business! Of course, I am aware that my school is in a relatively prosperous part of the city, but on several occasions I have taken pupils from other schools who did not have sufficient numbers to run a course on their own.

Annual procedure

A few weeks after my return from Brodenbach I send out a letter to parents inviting their son/daughter to take part in the following year's course. In the letter I outline briefly the proposal, touch on the aims of the course, give details of the hostel and area and invite them, if interested, to fill in an accompanying slip which is returned to me with a deposit of £20. The option of paying in instalments or a lump sum and the dates when payments are due are given on the slip. I collect in all the money by November. Some schools prefer to handle all financial transactions through the school fund but we have our own deposit and current account at a local bank. The money from the instalments and lump sums is paid into the deposit account which then accrues interest. Just before we leave for Brodenbach the balance is transferred to the current account to pay for hostel fees, currency and coach hire. At the end of the course any remaining

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money is divided among the participants and given as a refund, usually in March. Each year I clear the deposit account in readiness for the next course.

Cost

For the first course I had no idea what to charge. I costed it out as best I could on the basis of estimates from the coach firm and hostel, set the price at £130 and crossed my fingers. It worked out well and I was able to give a refund. For several years I managed to keep the cost at £130 but gradually I had to raise it to £140, last year to £150 and for 1988 I have assessed it at £165. Each year refunds averaging £20 have been given. In addition, the LEA has been most supportive of intensive work abroad and financial help has been given to the parents. The LEA also puts money at the disposal of the organisers of the course as resource money which enables us to plan more activities. Naturally this financial support cannot be guaranteed and I point this out in my initial letter. Last year the course, taking into account my refund and the financial support from the LEA cost £130 for Fourth years, £110 for Fifth years and £100 for Sixth formers. Pocket money is needed only for additional drinks, postcards and presents as everything is included in the cost. I need hardly stress the need for accurate book-keeping and the double checking of every financial transaction!

Manning the course

The whole idea of the course is that the pupil-teacher ratio should be a small one. It is difficult if there are more than eight pupils in a group. Usually there are two or three more German teachers in addition to myself and as many Foreign Language Assistants (FLAs) as I can arrange. The courses are so popular that former FLAs often join us in Brodenbach and teach for us. Their expenses and travel costs inside Germany are paid for by the course. Normally I ask FLAs to be in charge of Sixth form groups, but dependent on numbers and personalities I have had FLAs as tutors of Fifth form groups to good effect. One year our course coincided with a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) student's school practice and he, too, joined us as a tutor. When I take pupils from another school I normally request that their teacher join the team. Sometimes I invite colleagues who are not in full-time teaching at the present to join us so that I can preserve the small pupil-teacher ratio. Travel and accommodation costs for all tutors are paid for by the course.

Preparation for the course

Some details about the course are given out during lessons in response to pupils' questions and to whet their appetite, but official information concerning passport, insurance and currency is sent out in a letter in October. Insurance is included in the cost and is organised through the LEA. Pupils are responsible for their own passport, currency and the E111 form, but I devise my own medical form on which I ask for details of the pupil's own doctor and any medical information that may be relevant in an emergency. In January I hold a meeting

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for parents and pupils to give further information of travel arrangements, phone numbers and advice on language, dress, etc. It is a useful meeting in that I can reassure parents and also convey to them and pupils the amount of commitment to the course and the standard of behaviour I expect. I inform parents that pupils will sample the wine of the area, but I give a guarantee that the limits we set for the consumption of alcohol will be strictly kept and that no pupil is ever allowed to go to a public house without a member of staff.

Travel

We travel by coach from school to Brodenbach and back. We take quite a lot of equipment with us - tape recorders, course materials, video camera, etc and it is useful not to have to carry this. I have been fortunate to find an excellent coach firm which books the ferries and passenger tickets and whose driver knows the route. This is important because language work is undertaken on both the outward and return journey and staff are usually engaged in conversation with pupils. The quotation for the coach hire usually includes 200 miles driving inside Germany but often we have to pay for more. The driver accommodation in the youth hostel and road charges in Germany are paid for by the course. Sometimes we take a mini-bus with us if our numbers exceed 53 and the FLAs who join us in Brodenbach often bring their own cars. Having extra transport available in Brodenbach, especially for Sixth form activities, enables us to be more adventuresome in our activities. A good coach firm with a driver who is sympathetic to young people and can amuse himself for a week in a small village is as important an ingredient of the successful course as a good hostel.

Format of the course

Pupils are divided into groups (six/eight for Fifth formers, three/four for Sixth formers) and work with the same tutor all week. We have tried other alternatives but we find this the best. The day is divided into four sessions: Session 1. 8.30am - 10.20am, Session 2. 10.40am - 12.00am, Session 3. 1.15pm - 5.00pm, Session 4. 6.30pm - 8.15pm. Sessions one, two and four are normally spent in the youth hostel. Session three has come to be called the 'field work' session. Free time is normally between 5 and 6pm. Between the morning sessions there is a twenty-minute break when the warden provides hot water for us. We bring our coffee, tea and cordial and the pupils provide biscuits and cake from their own tuck boxes.

The work sessions in the hostel are very intensive; punctuality is insisted upon and German, of course, is used throughout. Since there are sufficient rooms in the hostel groups can work at their activity in peace and quiet. An enormous amount of work can be completed in this atmosphere and under these conditions. Pupils and teachers have time to explore the language in all its variety and the sense of achievement for both teacher and pupil is considerable. The materials of the course are so designed that there can be variety of activity within each session and the level of 'intensiveness' and degree of concentration can be maintained.

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The ethos of the course is built up gradually over the months prior to going to Brodenbach and pupils reach a peak of expectation and commitment just before we go. The framework for the sessions, i.e. meal times, coach journeys, relaxing in the pub and the day-to-day management, is just as important as the work sessions themselves because everything is conducted in German. At meal times the tutors sit among the pupils and engage them in conversation. Commentaries in German are given whenever we travel on the coach, all instructions are in the target language and pupils are encouraged to take the initiative whether it be communicating to the warden that a shower does not work, booking a guided tour of a castle or enquiring about cinema performance, times and cost. Gradually during the week confidence grows and pupils are eager to show their new skills.

Course content (Fifth year)

The work in the four sessions is unashamedly geared to the public examination that the candidates will sit the following June, so activities such as oral work, role-play, letter and essay writing, reading and listening comprehension practice are the standard diet. The pupils used to be entered for the Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) syllabus B examination and the three topics which the pupils had to prepare for this blended in beautifully with the type of work done on the course. We have adjusted to the demands of the new GCSE; there is now avid perusal of all notices, a daily session watching TV and listening to weather forecasts, an increased number of visits to places where the commentaries are in German and increased contact with German nationals. On the last course I took two of the Northern Examining Association's (NEA) fourteen topics (Health and Accommodation) as our theme and all the material was linked to these topics. I was able to do this as all our Fifth year pupils took part in the intensive course. I try to find new material for each of the skills and assemble it in folders each containing ten copies. I also give the tutors a complete set of all the material and ask them to peruse it beforehand so that they know exactly what is available on the course. Once we arrive in Brodenbach the material is set out in a separate room under the different headings together with five or six cassette recorders, dictionaries and writing material. If sufficient material is provided each group can work through a variety of activities without being hindered by another group. Course material which is novel and different in style and format can greatly influence the success of a course.

Fieldwork (Fifth form)

The field work session takes place every afternoon. The groups with their tutor work outside the hostel, either in the village itself or in Koblenz and Cochem. At the beginning of the course there are several vocabulary 'walk-about', firstly in the hostel itself (a rich source of notices for language work), then in the village and later on in the week in Koblenz and Cochem. Railway stations, post offices, departmental stores, supermarkets and cinemas are

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visited with a view to extending vocabulary, increasing comprehension and fulfilling language assignments. Fixed events each year are the *Kaffee und Kuchen* experience (where tutors and pupils together sit in a café and exploit the language connected with restaurants as well as enjoy the refreshment), a visit to a neighbouring castle with its dungeons and torture chamber and a wine tasting afternoon at a nearby vineyard. We always prepare the Fifth years for these visits beforehand by assembling them in session two and by explaining in German, with the help of pictures or drawings, the new words they are likely to hear. Understanding most of the commentary is a very good confidence booster. The wine tasting is very popular. The local vintner knows how to make the guided tour of the cellars and the subsequent commentary between tastings as simple as possible, and most pupils come away with a good sense of achievement as well as the glasses which are given as souvenirs. Sometimes on the last evening we take them to a suitable film. James Bond and ET have been a great success in the past and the advertisements are a rich source of language.

Often tutors will set tasks for their group during the field work session, either buying something or finding out information. A popular activity is interviewing the local inhabitants and recording their answers. Questions are prepared in advance and tutors try to ensure that the pupils can give information about themselves, their school and town, etc so that a conversation can follow. Tremendous fun is had listening to the recordings in the evening session. We also try to arrange a trip on the railways and time it so that it coincides with German school children coming home from school. There is also a *Trimm-Dich-Pfad* (exercise circuit) in the woods surrounding the village and this yields good language work. It is also a means of letting off steam! Sometimes for the last morning we organise a *Schnitzeljagd*, a type of treasure hunt, which involves groups of pupils finding out facts and fulfilling certain tasks. One such task is to find an egg hidden somewhere in the village and to get it boiled (one member of staff prides herself on her ability to find unusual hiding places!). As I said before, Brodenbach is now used to us and most of the inhabitants comply willingly with the annual request from an English school child to boil an egg.

Course content (Sixth form)

The Sixth form work has always been structured differently from that of the Fifth year, and with the introduction of the new JMB 'A' level syllabus with its course work option I shall have to rethink the whole programme for February 1988. However, I can give an account of the type of work undertaken to date. The Sixth formers also work in four sessions but their field work is separate. Session one is usually devoted to the introduction of a theme with a newspaper article, a poem, a song, a picture or a tape recording as a stimulus. Vocabulary sheets containing the key words and structures (prepared beforehand) back up the oral discussion of the theme. In session two the theme is continued, extended with additional material, and includes the devising of a set of questions related to the theme which could then be incorporated, where appropriate, in the field work session. In the final session of the day the Sixth formers, with the help of

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their tutors and using the material of the morning sessions together with the responses to their questions, write a 300-word language essay on the theme. By the end of the course the Sixth formers have five different essays and five sets of useful vocabulary. As I mentioned earlier the tutors are normally FLAs and the choice of topic depends largely on their own interests. I supply a list of possible themes from which they select the ones which interest them. They choose the stimuli and produce the vocabulary sheets. The success for this type of work depends on the calibre of the FLAs, but I could not staff the course without their help. Some of the topics which have been treated in this way are: Ethiopia, the Third World, surrogate motherhood, drug abuse, racism, unemployment, pollution, education, personal relationships, the generation gap, fashion, terrorism, equal opportunity, conscription, a divided Germany, vandalism, the role of women, mental and physical handicap and the death penalty.

Field work (Sixth form)

Sixth formers can cope with more demanding commentaries and their input can be greater. Visits and interviews were therefore arranged with this in mind. This is a list of people interviewed and places visited over the years: the Mayor's office, the forestry commission, a bank, a doctor, a priest, a home for mentally-handicapped children, a junior school, a grammar school, a vintner, the local newspaper offices, the Water Authority, police headquarters, an ambulance station, the Red Cross and the *Bundeswehr* (armed forces). In addition to the official visits the Sixth formers carry out language assignments in pairs and report back, for example by presenting a town or village to the Fifth years. One year when we had extra transport available Sixth formers were taken blind-folded to different parts of the surrounding area and left there. They had to find out exactly where they were and make their own way home, recording each stage of the journey. This meant a few anxious moments for me until all were safely home, but they enjoyed the challenge and responded well to it.

End of the day

By the end of the day everybody is ready to relax in the warm atmosphere of a local inn. Even the most inhibited Fifth former tends to blossom in this relaxed atmosphere. At 9.30pm the exodus up to the youth hostel begins and by 10pm the staff can repair to their own staff room to discuss the day's events over a bottle of wine, unless of course it's your turn for corridor patrol!

Summary

Working pupils abroad intensively in the foreign language for a short span of time is exhausting, exhilarating, addictive and tremendous fun. The benefits are enormous, not only in improved language competence but also on a social and a personal scale. Motivation increases, seeds are sown which grow into a long-term affection for the country and its people and the desire to continue studying German either at 'A' level or in higher education is fostered. The

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response of the pupils to these courses is overwhelmingly positive. I am convinced that the week's work in Brodenbach has a tremendous influence on a pupil's way of thinking. There is a very happy atmosphere on these courses and pupils experience at first hand the pleasure that a foreign language can bring. That, in itself, is the justification for me of organising intensive study visits abroad.

INTENSIVE GERMAN FROM AN AUSTRIAN PERSPECTIVE - AN LEA INITIATIVE

Peter Satchwell
Language Adviser Surrey LEA

The author describes an eight-day intensive German language course for 14 to 15-year olds in Surrey schools. The course has been run since 1983 in an Alpine village in Austria.

The initial thinking behind the course was to provide a task-orientated experience which would be more rewarding for young learners (with one year of learning German behind them) than the semi-holiday packages offered at that time by commercial travel firms. More specific objectives are listed below.

Setting up the course

Carinthia House in Wurlach was available at very economical rates. It is a large modernised farmhouse of typical Carinthian design - the old *Tenne* on the top floor now dries washing and wet clothes instead of hay. It provides good youth hostel facilities: dormitories, separate rooms for staff, showers, dining room, recreation room, ski room for those Croydon schools who use it in winter.

Transport from Surrey to Kärnten was initially a headache, but we finally settled for the quickest and cheapest way, flying with GTF/DANAIR from Gatwick to München and thence by Austrian coach to Kotschach-Mauthen. This enabled us to leave Surrey soon after mid-day and arrive at our destination by midnight; we have thus been able to start work immediately next morning without having to make too many allowances for 'jetlag'.

The cost of the course was, we thought, going to be a major obstacle to recruitment. In the first year the LEA underwrote the trip in case of a shortfall in numbers, but since the initial pump-priming the course has had to be self-financing at between £230-250 a head based on a minimum of 20 pupils and 3 staff. To our surprise there have been enough interested parents and grandparents to find the money and numbers have varied between 18 and, to our consternation in 1987, 36. The price is all inclusive except for individual passports and a small amount of pocket money. Staff have travelled free on the basis that it is a really demanding experience for all adults involved (a minimum of three teachers is essential on a ratio of 1:8 pupils) and that they have always sacrificed four days of their half-term holiday.

Initial publicity is sent out to all secondary schools in the autumn term, followed by a parents' evening to explain the aims of the course in full.

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Preparation of the course has involved a considerable amount of homework and collaboration on the part of the teachers and inspectors involved, but over four years we have gradually built up a series of adaptable core teaching packages which can be used each year.

The problem of continuity of staff is referred to later, but it is essential that at least one teacher has been on the course before, if the friendly and helpful relationships with the local people which have been carefully nurtured over a period of years are to be preserved. In a small community of a hundred houses these relationships are fragile and could easily be ruined by ill-disciplined pupils, insensitive teachers or sheer lack of awareness of local culture and attitudes.

Crucial to the success of the course each year has been the setting up of a programme of visits and activities arranged with the locals in advance of our arrival in Austria. Visits to the farm, the sawmill, the morning lessons at the *Hauptschule* in Kotschach and the interviews with shopkeepers are all negotiated several weeks ahead, though we still have to be prepared for some last-minute changes to the programme on arrival. The watchwords are therefore flexibility and adaptability!

Aims

What are the main aims of the course? Briefly:

- to put the learning of German into a context for the pupils;
- to raise awareness in the pupils of a different culture, a different climate, and a variety of accents/dialects (e.g. Kärntner folk speak differently from other Austrians who speak differently from Germans...);
- to create tasks which oblige pupils to use German for real;
- to encourage pupils to create their own questions to ask on visits or interviews;
- to bring them into contact with Austrians of all ages from 8 to 80;
- to boost their confidence to 'have a go' in German and not to worry about making mistakes;
- to expose them to a barrage of spoken German and thus boost their comprehension skills;
- to raise their visual awareness of the environment and to encourage them to think about how others live and work;
- to teach them to work and learn cooperatively in pairs or in small mixed ability groups;
- to adjust socially and be sensitive to the needs of others whom they have not met before.

Programme

After the inevitable minor problems along the way our 'core' programme has gradually evolved into the following pattern:

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- DAY 1 House rules + domestic arrangements
 Orienteering in Wurmlach
 Changing travellers cheques at the bank

 Treasure hunt in Wurmlach, Mauthen, Kotschach (clues +
 photographs to pinpoint)
 Treffpunkt: Café-Konditorei for drinks/cakes/ices (prearranged and
 supervised)
 Rota for the week's chores: shopping, breakfasts, lunches, washing
 up, etc.
- DAY 2 Lesson 1: Writing a diary in German - introduction
 Lesson 2: Food and drink (restaurant)
 Lesson 3: Brief geography + climate of Austria

 Afternoon walk up to nearby Alm (Alpine flora)
 Diary writing
 Singing
- DAY 3 Lesson 4: Talking about yourself and your interests
 Lesson 5: A year in the Alps - seasons, weather, customs
 Lesson 6: Introduction to farm vocabulary + tape recording of far-
 mer + preparation of questions to ask farmer

 Visit to small dairy farm
 Discussion of farm visit
 Diary
- DAY 4 *Wanderung*: climb (800m) up to *Almhütte*
 Descent by chairlift if working
 Lesson 7: Schools in Austria + revision of own timetable subject
 likes + dislikes
 Diary
- DAY 5 Visit to *Hauptschule* in Kotschach (3 lessons + friendly match:
 England v. Austria)

 Free afternoon for shopping
 Lesson 8: Discussion of school visit
 Lesson 9: Preparation for day visit to Venice or Salzburg
- DAY 6 Day trip (6.00 to 19.00) to Venice or Salzburg
- DAY 7 Lesson 10: Talking about your family and your work/holidays
 Lesson 11: Preparation for interviews in three villages
 Lesson 12: Negotiation of questions pupils want to ask interviewees

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Pre-arranged interviews with nine local shopkeepers, hairdressers, bank clerks, garage owners in all three villages: pupils each armed with at least three questions

Lesson 13: Discussion of information gleaned from interviews - report back from each group

Diary

Singing

DAY 8 Lesson 14: Preparation for visit to sawmill + recording of manager

Free afternoon for shopping

Discussion of week's experiences - feedback from pupils

Feierliches Abendessen im Gasthaus - fancy dress competition and distribution of prizes (treasure hunt and fancy dress)

The above programme has gradually evolved in the light of experience that the main teaching sessions need to be in the morning. Although some pupils find three hours too long most cope very well, especially as there is always a change of teachers and styles during the morning. Most visits are arranged for afternoons or early evening as far as possible, and we usually manage to build in about an hour of free time for relaxation, football, table-tennis each evening before the evening meal in the *Gasthaus*. This is a cooked two-course traditional Austrian meal with no concessions to English cuisine.

The diary in German

Curfew is at 20.30 after which all are back at base writing up their diary in German. It is in these evening sessions that individual tuition and team teaching come into their own: the diary is an essential part of the course as we insist that each pupil, whatever his/her ability, takes home a written account (in the perfect tense!) of what he/she has experienced in Austria. This diary has now become the 'rough' draft version, with lots of corrections and alterations, for a more ambitious scrapbook which pupils are invited to refine and illustrate in their own way during the three weeks following their return home. Prizes are awarded for the 'best' scrapbook handed in by the end of June.

The criteria for awards include the amount of time and effort put into the scrapbook, the originality of presentation and the evidence of real progress made by that pupil during the course - not just the accuracy of the German! Indeed, the presentation of such an extended piece of written work totally in the foreign language has proved beyond the stamina of all but the most able, and many arrived at a happy compromise of captions in English, main text in German.

Teaching materials and tasks

The teaching materials used on the course have been developed over four years by the teachers/inspectors who have run it; all are geared to the local area

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as far as possible. We have catered for a very mixed group of learners from as many as five different schools, most of them having learnt German in school as a second foreign language for eighteen months, some for only six months. Initially there was the added problem of mixed coursebook experience, but this has now been largely resolved since the adoption of *Deutsch heute* by most schools.

The pupil tasks start with an introductory treasure hunt (competitive) designed to get pupils working in pairs to open their eyes and absorb their new environment - not just the magnificent mountains and the clean air, but also the alpine houses and the variety of signs, notices, posters and advertisements. During the rest of the week each pupil is involved in shopping for our food, changing money, interviewing adults of various ages, and talking to the village children in those incidental polyglot encounters that always arise once the word gets round that the *Engländer* are here.

The main purpose of the morning lessons is a) to revise and refresh memories on the transactional language we know they will need during their stay and b) to prepare the pupils as best we can for the totally unfamiliar, unpredictable and highly specialised vocabulary they will encounter at the farm and the sawmill; under no circumstances are we prepared to give them a running translation of what has been said - this is listening comprehension with a vengeance!

The need for area-specific material meant that there was very little commercially produced text that we could use. We did, however, find useful ideas or information in *Ich über mich* (Brandreth 1983), *Wörter, Bilder, Situationen* (Lohfert + Scherling 1983) and in *Österreich* (Koppensteiner 1983). The rest of our packages were very much DIY covering the following language areas:

- changing money; £ = AS;
- ordering food and drink (based on Austrian menus);
- pairwork games to introduce landscape, trees, farm vocabulary (ranging from *Wiener Schnitzel* to *Kuhmist*) + visuals;
- cassette recordings of farmer + sawmill manager as listening activities prior to visit - i.e. pupils know roughly what each is going to say, but the details are different every year;
- maps of Austria: *Länder*, physical features + some diagrams of climate, tourism;
- brief summary of Austrian school system, reports, school day, subjects and *Noten* 1-5;
- a booklet of personal language to encourage pupils to talk about themselves, their family, their home and their hobbies (*Ich über mich*);
- some background information + town plan of Salzburg/Venezia. (In the case of Salzburg we have tried a town trail to ensure they get past McDonalds in the *Getreidegasse*, but they need at least four hours there to see anything properly);
- key questions about the working day as starters for the interviews. (Each group of three/four pupils is then obliged to negotiate among

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themselves who asks which questions and in which order to ensure a logical sequence and avoid duplication. Armed with a cassette recorder where possible and a location plan they are then sent to interview at least four 'victims' in two hours.); last but not least of the teaching packages is a thorough introduction to the perfect tense on OHP building up from simple verbs with *haben*: *heute haben wir ... gegessen/getrunken*, to more complex ones with *sein*: *um sechs Uhr sind wir aufgestanden*.

By providing a variety of slot fillers we have found that most pupils can master enough basic sentences to write what they need by the end of a week - and because all the sentences are the ones they want to write the language has meaning and begins to stick. Even some of the less able pupils are able to master the idea of inverted word order and can produce sentences like:

Heute sind wir sehr früh aufgestanden...

Zum Frühstück habe ich Semmeln mit Butter und Marmelade gegessen...

Diary writing is above all an open-ended task in which all pupils can operate at their own level of language competence and imagination. This is reflected in the examples given at the end of this chapter.

Organisation

The domestic organisation of the course needs a brief mention. As breakfast and lunch are DIY affairs we developed a rota system of pupils in groups of three or four each with the name of an Austrian *Land*, so that *Voralberg, Tirol, Kärnten*, etc knew at a glance when they had to get up early to go shopping or set out the breakfast. Chores groups also served as working groups throughout the week, and we deliberately mixed pupils from different schools so that they learned to give and take. In spite of this system the biggest problem for the staff remained clearing up meals in time to start lessons or set out for visits on time. By the end of the week there is the distinct risk of teachers collapsing from sheer exhaustion!

Lessons learned

An intensive course of this nature needs careful planning in advance both in England and on location in the foreign country: teachers need a thorough knowledge of the locality and contacts in the community, including the doctor. These contacts need cultivating on every visit and we have found the inhabitants of Wurlach, Mauthen and Kotschach most hospitable and helpful in emergencies because we have taken care to avoid letting our children loose on them unannounced and ensured that our charges respect local customs.

It is essential to find a relatively quiet place off the beaten tourist track and to go there out of season when the locals have time for the children. We have found the first week in June ideal from this point of view, even though some of

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our headteachers are alarmed by the proximity of their sacred fourth year exams week. It is equally important to equip pupils with the language of basic good manners so that they do not unwittingly offend adults and so that they have the right opening gambits to start off an interview:

Grüß Gott! Haben Sie bitte Zeit für uns? Dürfen wir Ihnen ein paar Fragen stellen? Ist es Ihnen recht, wenn wir eine Aufnahme machen? ...

And they must not forget to say thank you on a variety of occasions. It helped enormously to cement friendships when some of our pupils wrote thankyou letters in German from England to the people they had interviewed. Contacts with a local school are invaluable but not always easy to set up. We have been fortunate to be welcomed every year into the *Hauptschule* in Kotschach with a feast of traditional folksongs from the school choir. Our pupils have then spent the rest of the morning in lessons. The most enjoyable of these for our pupils have been music and English where the more confident teachers have involved all the pupils in truly international activities. Again, sensitivity and diplomacy are needed when 'invading' someone else's school for the day! Most successful of all have been the friendly football/basketball matches at the end of the morning, and it is a pity that an eight-day course is too short to develop the school encounters further. We have experimented with inviting the Austrian children to an English 'Tea Party' - great fun for the pupils, but yet more strain on the teachers!

Pupils' reactions

From our pupils' point of view the courses seem to have been overall a successful and rewarding experience, though we do have our doubts about one or two characters. They have been bowled over by the Alpine scenery, they have responded well to encouragement from the locals and from us to use their hesitant German, they have either thoroughly enjoyed or grumbled interminably about having to walk so far every day (there are no buses, but it is only 1.5km between each of the three villages).

There is a considerable culture gap between the children of silicon-chip, video-saturated Surrey and the poor and unsophisticated children of rural Kärnten, but that is a major bonus of the place, as is the totally Austrian diet with hardly a potato-chip in sight. Provided that pupils are warned about the food and encouraged to try everything half the problems go away. Table manners are quite another matter, however, and always need to be instilled into English children before eating out in a *Gasthaus* or any public restaurant abroad - British school dining arrangements have a lot to answer for!

What pupils retain linguistically from such a course is hard to quantify, but teachers who have been able to observe their own pupils back in the classroom have commented on the significant increase in self-confidence of most pupils and the willingness to use their German, i.e. they are no longer worried about making mistakes. Some pupils each year have been complimented on their spoken German by the villagers and this has been a great boost to the morale of

Intensive courses abroad

the individuals concerned. It would be naive to think that a pupil's competence in the language is suddenly going to be transformed by a week abroad. What we hope will be transformed is his/her attitude to the foreign country and to language learning as an activity.

Problems for the teacher and administrator

- It is essential to find supply cover for each teacher on the course.
- It is an educational programme, so must take place in term time.
- It is difficult to ensure some sort of continuity of teachers from one year to the next.
- It is not easy to find enough time to initiate 'new' teachers into what the course is about and what will be required of them; teaching styles and content, teacher responsibilities and the organisation of journeys all have to be discussed in detail.
- It is important to take committed, enthusiastic teachers who are flexible and willing and able to team teach using the best communicative methods.
- It is crucial that teachers realise before they go that the teamwork extends beyond the classroom for 24 hours a day *in loco parentis*. It is a busman's holiday twice over and a very draining experience for all concerned, demanding a combination of nursemaid and strict disciplinarian!
- It is important to publicise such a course at the beginning of the school year as it will be competing for parent/pupil attention with the usual ski trips, field courses, etc.
- An intensive course must not clash with established school-to-school exchanges as no teacher can be reasonably expected to cope with both in the same year.
- The optimum size of group for a course of this nature is between 20 and 25. The main criterion is not the pupil:teacher ratio but the group dynamics. 36 pupils produced too great a divergency of attitudes and militated against creating cohesion and sociability in the first weekend.

Summing-up

On the minus side is the fact that recruitment to the course has depended entirely on the willingness of parents to pay. Some pupils have scrimped and saved out of their own pocket money, some have been able to come only with granny's help, while one or two others have turned up with as much as £90 pocket money to spend. There is no doubt that the majority of parents will still pay for a ski course in preference to a language learning package.

On the plus side it must be said that the spin-offs and rewards of an intensive course abroad far outweigh the organisational problems. It is, after all, only in a foreign country that it comes home to pupils how satisfying and rewarding it is to be able to read, listen to and actually understand the language in its authentic everyday context. The filip and sheer pride many pupils

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experience at having conducted an 'intelligent' conversation with adult native speakers about their jobs and their personal lives is something we cannot replicate in the classroom. And this sense of progress and achievement has not been limited to speaking and listening - many pupils have doggedly slaved away at their diaries long past bedtime in their determination to get down exactly what they want to say, and to get it right!

Several pupils have told us what was recently confirmed by one parent who wrote:

He had a really superb time. He said he learnt more German in that ten days than he has since starting German lessons. He is already saving to go again next year.

In 1987 the boys outnumbered the girls for the first time - is the worm turning at last?

By preparing pupils for this sort of experience, by choosing the right time of year and the right place abroad, and by planning a programme of challenging tasks which oblige them to see the foreign language for what it is - a natural means of everyday communication just like their mother tongue - it is possible to provide them with an injection of self-confidence and enthusiasm for the language which will stay with them, we hope, for the rest of their lives. An intensive course should and can make a significant contribution to the 'apprenticeship in judgement' outlined by Eric Hawkins in *Modern Languages in the Curriculum*:

The unique value of the apprenticeship in judgement by able pupils in the foreign language classroom is that the pupil does not have to take the teacher's (or the textbook's) word for it. The ... teacher says in effect to the adolescent: what we are now learning in the classroom is in preparation for your journey abroad and your reading, when the language tools you are sharpening will be used to answer the question: What exactly are the differences between the way of life in the foreign community and the way of life you know at home? The language learnt from textbook and teacher, is also intended to be used to ask: How does the picture of the foreign country learned in the classroom compare with reality? (Hawkins 1981, p 44)

If only we could expand the provision of intensive courses before the age of 16 to most pupils as cheaply as possible, and offer them real language experiences outside the classroom where they use the language with 'force' in Eric Hawkins' terms (Hawkins 1981, p 248), then we may eventually succeed in making pupils and parents appreciate the value of foreign language learning in the curriculum and provide worthwhile objectives on the way to GCSE.

Intensive courses abroad

Freitag, den 24. Mai

Heute morgen habe wir zum fröhen
neun gefrühstückt. Ich habe zwei
Brötchen mit Butter und Erdbeermarm-
elade gegessen. Ich habe Tee getrunken.

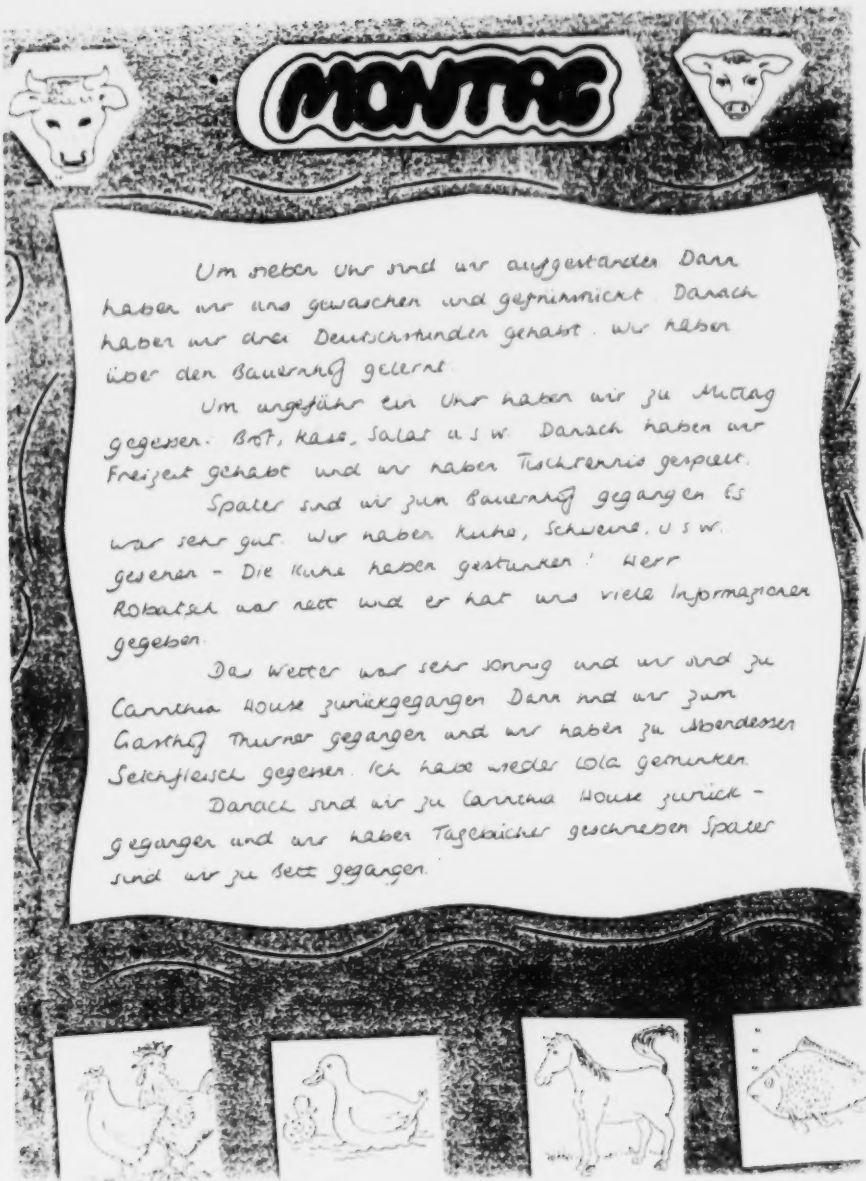


Dann habe ich
mein Zimmer
aufgeräumt!
Dann haben wir

alle eine Deutschstunde gehabt. Danach habe
wir einen Spaziergang gemacht. Wir sind
nach

Kötschach
Mauthen
gegangen.
Um halb
fünf habe
wir uns
im Café
Klaus
getroffen.
Dort habe
ich Fanta





INTEGRATING INTENSIVE SESSIONS INTO THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

Anthony Earl
Eltham College

Eltham College, an independent day and boarding school in London, has, following other independent school pioneers, built up over twelve years a travel scheme in which study abroad and exchanges are integrated into the curriculum. Two schemes are in operation for modern linguists:

- i. the extended stay or 'academic exchange' (to use the local terminology); that is, three or four weeks in a French or German partner school, and*
- ii. the more distinctive 'intensive visit' of one week's duration based on one school with which Eltham's relationship is particularly close. Apart from its operation in term time, the academic exchange does not claim great originality. Eltham does, however, regard its intensive visit as a House speciality. It is this scheme which is described below.*

As a school founded for the boarding education of missionaries' sons but now drawing its selective intake from a radius of ten to fifteen miles, Eltham College maintains a traditional interest in world geography and enjoys the habit of regular trips abroad under diverse subject headings: classical art and archaeology, rugby tours, windsurfing in the Mediterranean, Baltic cruises. The Travel Club, in existence since the 1920s, a committee of all interested staff, coordinates plans and dates, supervises technical arrangements, receives reports of trips accomplished and holds financial responsibilities separately from the College Bursary. Small surpluses over the years, modest generosity, a notional one pound levy per pupil per journey, all have accumulated to a level where travel-bursaries can be provided - if necessary one for each trip. Not infrequently young travellers themselves take an initiative by funding their journey through Saturday jobs or holiday employment.

Sixth form language studies

We envisage language teaching moving towards a situation where a stay abroad is an integral part of the Sixth form language course, as it already is for degree courses.

Coming over the horizon are Sixth form language studies, ever more deeply rooted in twentieth century themes, and language learning, based on

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increasingly contextual use of language (a feature which A/S syllabuses will make more apparent). Close acquaintance with the French way of life, and especially with the peculiarly French awareness of civic identity in town or village, will become indispensable. The same holds true for other languages commonly taught. At Sixth form level, lived experience (*du vécu!*), appropriately supported by classroom study, will both give access to lexis and phraseology, and enhance human awareness. That old idea of a pleasant family stay based on a 'home-to-home' exchange is excellent as far as it goes, especially for pupils in their early teens, but its defect is that time has to be whiled away on tourist trails and anodyne pursuits, whereas Sixth formers need orientation to maximise the benefit of their stay.

The most opportune moment for any such excursion, from the viewpoint of the school calendar and from that of learning psychology, is the end of the spring term of the first year Sixth. By then hiatuses and imperfections of language are on the way to being overcome, if ever they can be. Small group tuition has fostered readiness to converse freely, and even though genuine fluency is some way off, pupils are at least predisposed towards it.

Of our total of 160 Sixth form boys and girls, up to 40 take one or more 'A' level languages. Our Sixth form syllabus is built from the common amalgam of a sequential textbook, itself based on journalism and media French, newspaper articles and magazines chosen by ourselves to guarantee authenticity, and work with BBC tapes and occasional video, all interlarded with regular uncompromising presentation of advanced grammar rules. We plan a flexible sequence of fortnightly topics, through Youth, Education and Housing to Politics, Culture and Modern Literary Notions. Separate forays are made into Literature, Culture and Art, but the emphasis is on contemporary France, its people, language and culture in their present state, and on the French language itself, with its tendency to develop new locutions and distinctive expressions. Extracts are taken from periodicals such as *L'Express*, *Le Point* and *Le Nouvel Observateur*. Our set of Michaud's *Manuel de Civilisation Française* should somehow turn out more useful than it does... Longman's *France-Press* (edited by Mary Dalwood) and MGP's *Service Compris* both offer useful ideas.

The Academic Exchange and the Intensive Visit

The Intensive Visit, for nine years past part of the Lower Sixth French programme, is now a cornerstone of teaching in language, literature and civilisation. It provides psychological tuning for the Academic Exchange, which makes greater demands on pupils' sense of responsibility, independence and ability to withstand homesickness. (Sixth formers taking German as well as French forego the long stay in France so as to accomplish one in Germany.) On the academic exchange guest pupils simply follow a suitable timetable, sometimes enhanced by extra attention, and otherwise associate with family life. The same applies to incoming students at Eltham College. Participants in the Intensive Visit, on the other hand, are told that emphasis must be on the word 'intensive', both to maximise opportunity and to keep up the momentum. Both operations depend upon an exchange to ensure hospitality, and our

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families seem to accept with equanimity that their 16 to 17-year old will be away in the Lower Sixth for one month, and will be host to two foreign guests for another three or four weeks. We keep in reserve one or two kindly families to help out where an English partner would be embarrassed to give hospitality, and can betimes call upon the resources of our small boarding unit.

Diagram One on p 38 illustrates our planning of an average Lower Sixth year, having regard to holiday dates here and abroad and to examination periods. Our overall intention is to make our students aware that they approach a key examination not as outside spectators, stealing a glance into a forbidden garden, but as people with inside knowledge, able to compare their home experience with knowledge of a foreign country and its own self-perception.

Organising the Intensive Visit

Our Intensive Visit, which operated at first in a Normandy town where we were accommodated in an *Ecole Normale*, has subsequently moved to a town in western France where a partner school serves as base. The incoming party sent to us by the French school is of comparable size and accomplishes an inquiry of kindred methods and spirit. The whole operation follows seven distinct phases in which minor details are crucial.

Phase I (mid-autumn). Sixth formers, initiated to advanced study methods, have adjusted to our requirements for spoken and written contributions and commenced personal reading. Themes and texts start to home in on potentially useful topics during both Intensive Visit and Long Stay, especially school organisation *outré-manche*, the political structure of a French commune, and some awareness of industry and agriculture. At this stage all teaching is conducted in French.

We begin a series of letters and telephone calls to opposite numbers in France, to decide precise dates, numbers in the party, and above all, respective themes. A normal pattern, allowing for changing holiday dates, is: the French students with us in the first week in March; we in France just before Easter.

In 1986, caution led to choice of a double theme for both of us; for the French: 'Youth and Culture in a London Borough'; for us: *La Politique et l'Agriculture dans un Département Français*. Serendipity led us to time our visit for the week following the *législatives*.

Phase II (January/February). Colleagues on both sides, by no means only linguists, find a sufficient number of meetings and visits to fill five working days. Subdivision of the party ensures that the ground is fully covered, and maximises pupil participation - no backseat silences! Broadly speaking, each side arranges the other's programme, approaching likely personalities and obtaining outline agreement to a visit. Accumulated experience has taught us that the range and level of personalities willing to help us are much wider and more highly placed than we might expect. A list of names and addresses, with appointment times pencilled in, is finally sent off to the partner school.

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Phase III (February). Plans are formally announced, tickets bought, payments made. Correspondents exchange letters of welcome, in a spirit of co-operative amity. Furthermore, each pupil takes responsibility for one or more official addresses. As well as clarifying our purposes, he or she must confirm date or time and indicate how many pupils will form the visiting group. (The onus will be on him later, to make introductions and lead questioning.) Busy administrators tend to reply slowly to our requests. Pupils are told to solve clashes or overlap halfdays by further letters and telephone calls. It is essential to avoid irrelevant activities like guided tours of museums.

Phase IV (two weeks before departure). A letter to parents issues final instructions. We make abundantly clear the technique to observe in interviews, arrange one or two practice sessions, briskly revise interrogatives and marker expressions. Some financial difficulties may require help. In 1986, the charge per pupil was £95, including all insurance, transport and minibus hire. The full programme for the week in that year is presented as Appendix I on p 39. Its exceptional detail would have been impossible without our French colleagues' enthusiasm.

Phase V. With the usual hassle of cross-channel travel, the week takes place. Although the exercise can be led by two staff, convenience has led us for the last three years to be three, two driving their own cars, and one at the wheel of a minibus. Chauffeuring groups to widely spaced destinations is one of our main tasks. Each partner school makes available to the other a room for assembly and consultation; we are allotted an annex to the *refectoire*. Appendix II on p 40 is the plan of a typical day, the cardinal features of which are priority to student initiative and independence, but with frequent debriefing and counterchecking.

Phase VI. In a session on the morning after, the leader of each group presents in English a *résumé* of their findings, and teachers clear up misunderstandings about vocabulary. It is a strict rule that during the evening following a visit, the group leader should write a letter of thanks in French, perhaps helped out by his partner, and certainly attempting to avoid stereotyped expressions.

Phase VII. A high quality essay in French, summarising the total knowledge of each pupil in one confined subject, both reinforces that knowledge and its corresponding linguistic register, and provides personal satisfaction. Discussed beforehand by teacher and pupil, its successful completion, as the major written exercise of the summer term, attracts comment in individual end-of-term reports. While still in France, accompanying staff, who have attended most of the interviews, draw up a list of essay topics, so expressed as to require evidence synthesised from several meetings and not merely one. Students write their reaction in French, stretching in enthusiastic cases to 1500 words. A *copie nette* from which errors have been eliminated with teacher's help but not corrected in a traditional manner, is typed out by the author (or author's mother) and roneoed or photocopied. We thus create 50 booklets, complete with illustrations and diagrams, so that all interested, including the personalities interviewed, may

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receive one copy, as proof of our serious intentions and sound work - and so laying the ground for a subsequent year. These booklets, usually posted to France in midsummer, constitute the climax of the learning exercise.

Language acquisition

The nature of the interviews, and therefore the linguistic level attained, depends upon an infinite series of human variables. Teachers might pass comment upon a constantly recurring error, or suggest some useful vocabulary for a specific circumstance, but otherwise hold back. Naturally, students look to their own French hosts for a supply of language. Indeed, learning to discover vocabulary, phrase and locution is at the core of this five-day educational process. There is of course a risk that a host personality will be over-fond of the sound of his own voice, or over-imbued with a sense of his own importance, but it is far more likely that he will be profoundly aware of his sudden educative role. In fact, our enterprise bears witness to the genial openmindedness of a French provincial centre, and to sensitivity to the manner of thinking of young people. Some sessions turn out unmistakably brilliant; when the officer commanding the local *caserne* permitted a visit to his regiment, discussion with senior officers was allowed to run on for an hour and a half, during which students excelled themselves with sharp, well-phrased questions on military service, NATO and nuclear policy and weaponry, so eliciting explicit praise from an otherwise hardbitten *monsieur le colonel*. Pupils gave their teacher, silently observant in a corner, similar cause for pride around the desk of an up-and-coming *sénateur-maire*; careful preparation had ensured they could ask pertinent questions on electoral reform, party manifestoes, social needs in the countryside and the effects of the EEC. Farmers have proved a source of genial hospitable talk, and many a farm visit has been cheered by an invitation into the parlour for a glass of wine, or coffee and calvados.

This interviewing exercise observes all the tenets of advanced language learning. The medium of communication used is not a mock-up of the real thing, but a speech act requiring response and eliciting further speech acts. The purposes of discussion are extrinsic; that is, the objective is information looking beyond the formalities of educated language, although these formalities are essential if the information is to be efficiently obtained. Whilst the debriefing sessions allow for the correction of grammatical errors, and provide opportunity for classroom-type reinforcement of language naturally acquired, the problem of tolerance of error is easily settled by the need for meaningful communication. A mistake that confuses the grammar of the sentence is also the mistake that elicits a puzzled expression from the interlocutor and provokes a request for clarification; hence the speaker is impelled to rephrase his original thought, or face conversational embarrassment. Our students sometime claim in later years that their linguistic fluency is tuned to a higher pitch than it ever regains in learning experiences at school or university. Furthermore, depending upon the week's theme, the factual content of their inquiries provides valuable support material for politics, history, or social and geographical subjects, and it is

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interesting that our French partners themselves interpret the major benefit as *éducation civique*.

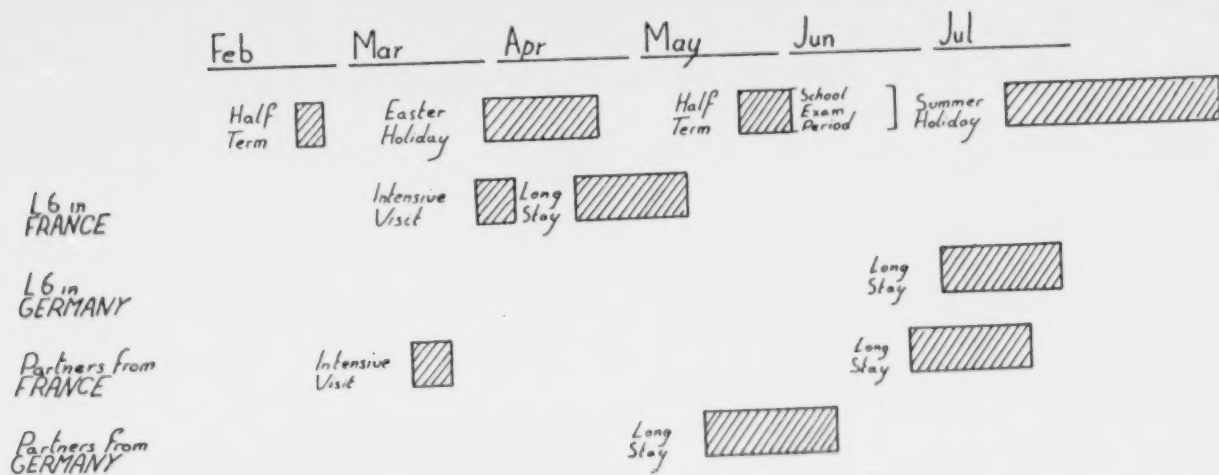
Timetabling problems

I am often asked: 'How do you persuade other colleagues to tolerate arrangements that require absence from school?' In point of fact, schemes have been allowed to grow at a pace colleagues find natural, and we regularly repeat explanations, to stress the educational purpose of absences. It is generally recognised that if these trips are to take place at all, the dates chosen must heed the convenience of partner schools abroad. As a general rule, French teachers avoid using holiday time for exchange trips of any kind, and German teachers prefer not to do so. The education authorities in both countries accept this restriction as reasonable. Might it not be, however, that the first year of our Sixth form, if properly planned, has much more leeway than entrenched interests are willing to admit? The Intensive Course technique is valid by no means only for languages, but can be used effectively in other subjects. (At Eltham College the English Department has successfully operated a Reading party in the Lake District for some years, and, of course, in certain schools Villiers Park courses are much respected.) Longer absences caused by study periods in *lycées* and *Gymnasien* may attract grumbles, and there our local response is to provide a list of work set, to be posted back, for attention by, say, history and geography staff, who may well have proposed topics related to the areas where the Sixth form will be staying. It is above all vital that colleagues should realise that a stay abroad is not planned merely for linguistic advantage, but as a means to personal maturation, producing a more adult and more efficient attitude towards study. It is a truism that well-motivated 16-year olds are capable of working to great capacity and at surprising speed.

Feed-back

The best week in the Sixth...; my French was in a better state than it has ever been since...; we got on so marvellously... Many pupils in the second year Sixth reminisce happily about their experiences and recall specific vocabulary and information, and indeed it is flattering to note that ex-pupils on a visit down from university or indeed later, talk with enthusiasm of the permanent value of this special week. Whilst clearly this scheme would be eminently suitable training for new 'A' level syllabuses where emphasis is placed on civilisation, in fact other pressures - the school's literary bias and its interest in Oxbridge entrance - lead us to retain our loyalty to a literary 'A' level. New 'A' level syllabuses in 1990 may prove especially advantageous to us. An extension, timetable and finance permitting, would be an Intensive Visit to Germany. If critics doubt the value of numerous parties plying their questions round Europe, it should be recalled that the concept is reciprocal. Our incoming French students declare they derive as much benefit from a parallel week here, as we do in their country.

Diagram One: timetable planning, showing pupil-absence abroad.



Intensive courses abroad

Note: dates given are idealised. In practice shifts are necessary every year because of the variable date of Easter and because of staggered summer holidays in Germany.

Matthew Tatham

Intensive courses abroad

APPENDIX I

Programme de la semaine

vendredi 21 mars

- 08.00-10.00 conférence d'inauguration donnée par professeur d'histoire du lycée sur le nouveau système électoral
10.00-11.00 explications et élucidations faites par les professeurs accompagnateurs
14.00-15.00 assistance à une séance publique du conseil général du département
14.00-16.30 chez un exploitant agricole, membre du parti socialiste officiel

samedi 22 mars

- 09.00-10.30 chez le secrétaire du Parti Socialiste Unifié
09.30-11.30 chez le secrétaire régional du Parti Socialiste officiel
11.00-12.30 chez la grande dame de la politique régionale, veuve du maire gaulliste

lundi 24 mars

- 09.00-11.30 reçus par le Directeur du Personnel de la Mutualité Sociale Agricole
09.00-11.30 à la Mairie de la Ville de X, pour une discussion avec le Maire (Union Démocratique Française) et son adjoint (Rassemblement Populaire Républicain)
09.15-12.00 chez un exploitant agricole du sud du département
11.30-12.15 reçus par le Député-Maire de la Ville de Y
14.00-15.30 chez M. le Sénateur, président du Conseil Régional (Confédération Démocratique Française)
17.00 -- reçus par M. le Maire de Z (Parti Socialiste dissident) avec dîner au restaurant

mardi 25 mars

- 09.30-11.30 discours par le Directeur de Publicité de la Co-opérative Agricole; reçus par M. le Député-Maire de A (chef-lieu)
chez un fermier écologiste
chez le secrétaire régional du Front National
chez le secrétaire du Parti Socialiste officiel

mercredi 26 mars

- 09.00-11.30 discours, visite et discussion au Lycée Agricole
12.00-15.00 déjeuner d'honneur au lycée pour tous les correspondants français et anglais et leurs professeurs
15.30-16.30 reçus par le Directeur des services publicitaires de la Chambre d'agriculture
16.30-18.00 chez le secrétaire du Parti Communiste (maire adjoint)

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APPENDIX II

Notes on a typical day

08.00	students brought into school by hosts; groups allotted, means of travel decided if not already known; reassembly time given; if time to spare, teams plan out questioning strategy
09.00	departures in various directions; a trusted group may be allowed to conduct interview without <i>accompagnateur</i> (such unsupervised meetings are invariably successful - why?)
11.30	debriefing in a favoured café
12.00-13.30	lunch (in <i>lycée</i>)
13.30	reformation of groups for afternoon programme; after which students free to return to hosts, or to meet informally

Routine for interviews

(normally taught to students before week begins)

All students must ensure that they accomplish two meetings per day and some manage three. The style has over the years developed characteristic features:

- a) group leader approaches receptionist or rings doorbell, with manifest trepidation (teacher keeps low profile - *this is your chance, not mine.*);
- b) host personality appears; if human nuances permit, leader utters first words, and makes introductions, including *mon professeur*;
- c) invitation to take seats, often around large table in conference room;
- d) personality addresses us, often with short prepared lecture; administrative and business premises can lay on a video, industrial premises a tour of the works; otherwise we ask people to be their natural selves;
- e) (the key item) questions are invited, and students know that match rules are applicable, i.e. leader initiates but assumes that others will each ask two or three questions; shirking and dumbness are not tolerated; courtesy *de rigueur*, but grammatical fumbling is not an embarrassment; French invariably indulgent; questions may challenge; students learn not to fear a difference of viewpoint;
- f) interviews may last two or three hours - busy people are generous with time; *Accompagnateur* may raise eyebrow as hint to group leader to draw discussion to close, which he will do with a gentle speech of thanks; thereafter a series of warm handshakes.

To quote from the short list of rules for the trip: 'Refreshments may be accepted if ever they are offered, but smoking is not allowed at any time.'

Intensive courses abroad

Note: I pay grateful tribute to those colleagues who have joined me on Intensive Visits, Ian Worthington (now of Oundle School), David Jones, Stephen Tint and Keith Barron (who is in fact Head of English).

This article has been prepared with the indispensable help of Mrs Jenny Ledger.

PART TWO: SECTIONS BILINGUES

As Dr Colin Hadley explains in the following chapter, the concept *section bilingue* (learning a curriculum subject through the medium of a second foreign language) originated in France in 1969 as one of the fruits of the Franco-German (De Gaulle-Adenauer) treaty of co-operation (Conventions of 10th February 1972 and 6th July 1976). The concept of *section bilingue* or *classe bilingue* as it is called in the minute from the Académie de Nantes quoted by Ann King (*Intensive lessons from the past*, page 150) has been overtaken by a related concept in France, that of the *section internationale*. The *décret* from the ministry of Education No. 81-594 of 11th May 1981 provides (our translation):

International sections comprising at least 50% French pupils and at least 25% foreign pupils can be set up in écoles, collèges and lycées to enable foreign pupils and French pupils together to receive an education involving the progressive use of a foreign language in certain subjects ...

The education offered in sections internationales aims to facilitate the integration of foreign pupils into the French educational system and to train French pupils in the thorough practice of a foreign language, particularly by using that language for the teaching of certain disciplines.

In a later decree (21st March 1978) the French ministry provided for the setting of special *baccalauréat* and *brevet des collèges* examinations to meet the needs of such *sections internationales*.

The concept of the *section internationale* as described in the ministerial decrees is closer to the syllabus of the European Schools (with their international clientele) than to the concept as understood by schools in the UK whose *sections bilingues* programmes are described in the chapters that follow.

The idea of using a working language to teach a curriculum subject was already part of the programme of the European Schools set up by officials of the European Coal and Steel Community (forerunner of the EEC) for the education of children of ECSC's multi-national staff. The novelty of the *section bilingue* was to use the technique in conventional schools.

The European school model

The first European School had opened in Brussels in 1958. Others followed at Mol (Belgium) and Varese (Italy) in 1960, Karlsruhe (Germany) in 1962, Bergen (Holland) in 1963, a second school in Brussels in 1974, a school in

Sections bilingues

Munich (Germany) in 1977 and one at Culham (Oxfordshire) in 1978. All of these schools with their multi-lingual intake follow the same pattern. In the primary department pupils devote part of every day to learning a 'working language' other than their mother tongue. They have the choice of:

for German speakers: French or English (as 'working language')
for French speakers: English or German (as 'working language')
for English speakers: French or German (as 'working language')
(Other children can choose any of the three working languages.)

When they reach the secondary stage, which lasts seven years, pupils are taught in their mother tongue (or their preferred language if bilingual) while special attention is given to their 'working language'. In the second year they begin to learn a second foreign language (Language III) which may be any one of the other community languages.

In the third year history and geography are taught in the 'working language' and this continues until the end of the course (age 18), when they take the European *Baccalauréat*. In this examination they are tested orally and in writing in all their subjects, including those that they have learned through the medium of the working language.

An important point made in favour of this approach to teaching geography and history is that it not only motivates the mastery of the working language but that children of various nationalities work together, so that the teaching is bound to adopt a standpoint that is non-national. This aspect of teaching through the medium of a language other than the mother tongue is of obvious importance for any school whose aim is to arm its pupils against narrow national prejudices (including linguistic prejudices). Its relevance to schools in communities where two languages are in common use, sometimes in uneasy partnership, as in Canada or in Wales, is clear. We include in this section therefore a brief account of 'immersion' language learning in a bi-lingual school in Wales. There may be lessons to learn for our tense inner cities from work in the field of *section bilingue* which go beyond obvious gains in mastery of another language.

UK initiatives

The concept of *section bilingue* has been slow to win acceptance in the UK. There are, however, two outstandingly successful examples, both of which were described in the first edition of this book in 1978 and which have continued to thrive since then. One, Mill Hill School, is in the independent sector; the other, Goff's School, Hertfordshire, is a county maintained secondary school with an all ability intake. The story of these two pioneering and now firmly established, schemes has been brought up to date for this edition. We also have an account of a more recent initiative in another maintained comprehensive school, Heathside in Surrey, which promises to be no less interesting.

The *section bilingue* schools described here, and the European Schools, chose geography and history as the curriculum subjects to be taught through the

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medium of a foreign language. It is not difficult to see why. But the question is bound to be asked, might not another curriculum subject lend itself equally well to *section bilingue* treatment? Why not, for example, cookery in French? The prestige enjoyed by French *cuisine* makes it an obvious choice. This is precisely the question that Helen Whiter set out to try to answer in her imaginative one-year experiment which, we hope, may encourage further 'action research' of this kind. As Helen Whiter suggests, many language teachers must have a second interest (hockey? drama? table-tennis?) which involves tutor and learner 'having a go' together and so can appropriately be taught in the foreign language.

GOFF'S SCHOOL, HERTFORDSHIRE

Colin Hadley

Goff's School was founded in 1964 as a three-form coeducational Grammar School with a selective intake at 11+. Its Headmaster, Dr Colin Hadley, wrote an account of the introduction (in 1973) of the school's section bilingue for the first edition of this book. The scheme has thrived and survived the reorganisation of Goff's in the late 1970s as a non-selective secondary school catering for all abilities.

Because of its intrinsic historical interest we re-print Dr Hadley's original account followed by his appraisal of the scheme as it is currently organised.

Section bilingue experiments began in France in 1969 as one of the fruits of the Franco-German treaty of cooperation. Their aim was to provide a growing number of people more than usually competent in the foreign language and therefore more valuable in the Community context, whatever their eventual role in society might be, and to give an impulsion to language learning in general. The main features of the classes set up were: extra teaching time for the foreign language as an addition to the timetable and not at the expense of other subjects; additional assistant staffing to enable classes to be split for part of the time for exploitation of material learned; the use of other subjects in the curriculum for the teaching of the foreign language; and a class exchange with the linked school in the other country at the end of the first or second year.

The French Ministry of Education was keen to extend the experiment to English and in spring 1972 invited a British delegation (consisting of an HMI from England, an HMI from Scotland, a local authority adviser and a secondary Head) to look at what was happening in France with regard to German and perhaps to consider the feasibility of classes being set up in Britain. As a member of that delegation, I was impressed by the high standard of much of the work, but felt that overall the experiment was not being carefully enough controlled, that much depended on the quality of the assistant and that the teaching of German through other subjects was a pious hope rather than a reality. I was sure that, given the right conditions, the French scheme could be reproduced over here, perhaps in an improved form. In spring 1973 a French delegation, led by the doyen of the *Inspecteurs Généraux* for modern languages, visited Britain and had informal discussions with the Department of Education and Science and a number of local authority officers and schools. It was eventually decided that *sections bilingues* might possibly be set up in three or four schools in Scotland, Somerset and Hertfordshire. It could in no sense be a

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national or controlled experiment, since neither finance nor other material aid could be provided by the Department and the base for launching a class would need to be the expertise and enthusiasm of the schools concerned and the benevolence of their local authorities.

Our experiment at Goff's School had a twofold aim:

1. to seek to produce a small number of people, entering different walks of life, who would be very fluent in French (we were not setting out to produce more graduates in French and therefore felt it was important to ensure that the curriculum of those involved was not appreciably distorted and that no vital subject was dropped to give more contact time with French);
2. to compare the results obtained from intensive teaching with those obtained from the usual five-year drip-feed approach and to consider the implications for the pattern of language learning in the secondary school.

We were fortunate in having a number of well-qualified and enthusiastic modern languages teachers and an authority prepared to offer not only moral but also financial and staffing support. A pattern for the experiment was fairly quickly evolved:

1. Pupils selected would in the first year receive six or seven periods of French instead of the usual four.
2. One and a half assistants (instead of the usual one) would be provided by the authority to enable the class to be split for part of the time for exploitation of material.
3. Two intensive week-ends would be organised in the first year by the adviser, at residential centres in the country.
4. There would be a fortnight's exchange at the end of the first year with a linked *classe bilingue* at the Lycée Montchapet, Dijon.
5. In the second year, in addition to the normal four periods of French, the class would learn their history (two periods) and geography (two periods) in French. Our history and geography departments took the view that their subjects would be protected as long as the pupils remained in contact with material and concepts during the year; the acquisition of superior text books from France (e.g. Bordas, *Le Moyen Age*, Collection Pernet 5e) would be a bonus. We hoped to be able to appoint two assistants, with qualifications in history and geography, to teach these subjects.
6. A *camp mixte* would be arranged at the end of the second year for the linked English and French classes.
7. In the third year, in addition to the normal four periods of French, the class would be taught *Etudes de l'environnement* (in lieu of religious studies) in French for two periods a week. Again it was hoped an assistant would be able to do this work.
8. At the end of the third year the pupils would sit 'O' level (Cambridge). The total number of hours spent studying French would approximate to the total of the five-year course and a comparison of results would be interesting.

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Moreover, the examination would give some sense of urgency to the intensive teaching and provide some kind of objective yardstick half-way through.

9. In the fourth and fifth years, although all the language skills would continue to be developed, much emphasis would be placed on wide reading which would reflect the interests of pupils both in their academic subjects and their hobbies. An 'AO' examination would be negotiated with the Cambridge Syndicate for the end of the fifth year.
10. Financial support would be required from the authority for books and exchanges. New course books would be required because of the pace and nature of the experiment; history and geography books would need to be imported from France, also materials for *Etudes de l'environnement*; a wide private reading scheme was envisaged right from the first year, but especially in the fourth and fifth years. The cost of all this would be beyond the school. All the pupils had to participate in the exchanges and we anticipated a certain number of parents would need financial help.

Pressure from parents to have their children selected for the experiment has far outweighed reluctance, and support and enthusiasm from parents involved has been quite exceptional.

Inevitably, as the experiment has progressed, some modifications have had to be made to the original scheme devised. We quickly discovered that assistants are too inexperienced in the craft of teaching to provide the kind of support required by the experiment. At the end of the first year we sought in vain a suitable native-speaker instructor. Then we were given permission to appoint an additional qualified teacher and were fortunate enough to obtain a graduate from a French university with experience of *colonie de vacances* work and a year's assistantship in this country. He took over the history and geography teaching in French and then the *Etudes de l'environnement*, but acted as an ordinary member of the French department for the rest of the time. When the native-speaker left after two years, we tried without success to replace him with a qualified French national, but eventually appointed an English graduate in French who had been associated with a *section bilingue* during his year as an assistant.

Although after three and a half years we would hesitate to put forward firm conclusions about the experiment, we do feel that we can deduce clear trends. None of these are surprising, but their strength is interesting.

Cohort 1 sat 'O' level (Cambridge) in June 1976 at the end of the third year. Of the 26 pupils involved (thirteen boys, thirteen girls), two failed with D grades, four obtained C grades, seventeen obtained B grades and three obtained A grades. Cohort 2 sat 'O' level last June at the end of the third year. All 33 pupils passed, four with C grades, thirteen with B grades and sixteen with A grades. It would seem pretty clear that better examination results are achieved after three years of intensive teaching than after five years of even spread.

Cohort 2 seems to be making much the best progress and cohort 3 to be finding the challenge most demanding. Although the intensive approach

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benefits all the grouping, there is no doubt that the most spectacular results are obtained with the most able.

Social background would appear to be an important factor. Some of the pupils in cohort 1 would be very borderline grammar school in general ability, but were successful because of strong parental support. The experiment appeals to what we might term middle class parents.

The morale of all the cohorts has been very high and there has been no danger, as we originally feared might be the case, of reaction against over-exposure to French. The yearly objectives (visits to France at the end of first or second years and 'O' level at the end of the third) have perhaps played an important part in maintaining motivation.

The teaching of other subjects in French is a vital motivating factor, since the natural survival element is maintained continuously. It is important that the subjects involved should have a high reading, listening, writing and speaking requirement and seem important to the pupils.

The quality of the teaching is of course extremely important and more than just a skilled academic approach is needed. The intensive week-ends and the visits to France call for real versatility on the part of the teacher. We have identified each cohort with a particular languages teacher for the first three years with only one cohort so far experiencing a break in continuity of teaching.

Of the language skills there is no doubt that listening and reading comprehension have been developed to an exceptional level; this doubtless results from the early bias required to render the teaching of other subjects through French effective in the second year. Oral production tends to be good to very good (with fluency superior to accent and intonation). Written production in large measure reflects the basic general ability of the pupil, ranging from very good to weakish.

The support of the LEA, moral as well as financial, is absolutely vital and we have been fortunate in having interested and sympathetic officers.

The experiment has not been noticeably resented by other French classes, but seems to have improved their motivation and achievement. One can foresee our 'O' level results being improved by more than just the performance of the experiment classes. The morale and keenness of the teaching staff is also boosted.

With three years or so behind us and some pretty clear trends established, we have decided to absorb the experiment, in a modified form, into the normal curriculum of the school in a four-form extended grammar school entry. At the end of the first year (with six periods a week) the top two sets emerging for French will receive the intensive treatment. In the second year, in addition to their four periods of French they will receive instruction in French in either history or geography (two periods). It was felt fair to take one class each (as at present) but not two from these departments. Both sets will have a fortnight's exchange with classes in France at the end of the second year. In the third year, in addition to their four periods of French, the sets will have *Etudes de l'environnement* (two periods) in French (the time being taken probably from religious studies and music, which will still continue to keep a foothold in the curriculum). Intensive days will probably replace intensive week-ends in the

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present economic climate. 'O' level will be taken either at the end of the third year or half-way through the fourth. Although the course is rather less intensive than the original experiment, we anticipate that our techniques will be improving and the pace will be able to be maintained. The special 'AO' examination will be taken at the end of the fifth year.

We shall, of course, expect to modify the programme in the light of further information provided by the progress of the three cohorts, the last of which will not complete its five year course before 1980. We are clear, however, that an intensive approach for French in one form or another will remain a permanent feature of our curriculum.

(The above account was written ten years ago. Since then the scheme has continued to thrive and the Headmaster reports as follows on its operation in 1987 in what is now a non-selective school).

Our *section bilingue* continues to be an established feature of the curriculum. It is described to parents in the school prospectus (1986/7) as follows:

On entry to the school pupils are placed, on the evidence of their primary school record, in the Upper or Lower Band but there are arrangements for movement between bands. In Years 2 and 3 in the Upper Band groups G and E follow a *section bilingue* approach, involving the study of Geography in French in year 2 and General Studies in French (*L'Homme et son environnement*) in year 3. The G group takes GCE 'O' level in French at the end of year 3 or the beginning of year 4 and the E group at the end of year 4.

These two forms also study a second foreign language, German, in years 2 and 3.

Thus the sequence is as follows:

1. early setting in year 1 and reappraisal of this at the end of the year;
2. intensive afternoon at the end of year 1;
3. Geography in French in year 2 (two periods a week);
4. General Studies in French in year 3 (two periods per week);
5. exchange in year 2 with Lycée Montchapet, Dijon, for top set; in year 3 with CES Pontpailleur for second set (Any pupils who cannot afford it, we help financially);
6. (sometimes) a week or week-end organised by the school in France.

Results

The results have continued to please. All the early entries for 'O' level in 1986 were successful. 33 Third formers (top set) obtained 23 A grades, nine B grades and one C grade. 30 Fourth formers (second set) obtained five A, twenty B and five C. In future we shall probably be entering both sets in the Fourth year, the top set in November and the second set in June.

Both sets take 'AO' French in the Fifth year, the top set in November and the second set in June. Of the 59 candidates in 1986, seventeen obtained grade A, nineteen grade B, fifteen grade C, four grade D and four grade E.

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One of our main problems has been to find the right challenge for the top set in years 4 and 5. 'AO' does not stretch them enough. The Institute of Linguists Levels I and II, with which we have flirted, has not been exactly what we wanted. Not all pupils are capable of tackling the alternative SUJB 'A' level syllabus. We do put some candidates in for 'A' level in the Fifth year. In 1986 we entered ten. Four obtained grade A, three grade B and three grade C.

The problem with entering pupils for 'A' level in the Fifth year is that it tends to weaken the Sixth form take-up in French. We have always said that too great a take-up of candidates for French in the Sixth form would be against the spirit of the enterprise and we are happy to see pupils go into the science Sixth form with a high grade in 'A' level French. However, we find that we lose some promising arts pupils. We shall be happy to welcome the new 'AS' (Advanced Supplementary) paper as the ideal solution.

Relations with other subjects

The *section bilingue* has been so long established as part of the normal curriculum pattern that there are no difficulties from other subjects. In year 2 the Geography Department is consulted about concepts to be inculcated, but they reckon their subject does not suffer anyway. Pupils return to it, in English, reinvigorated, in the Third year, which is the vital one for preparation for options. Geography does well in the choice of Fourth/Fifth year options: there are four sets (over 100 out of 150 pupils in the year). In year 3, religious studies and music lose one period each but retain a period and therefore contact with pupils. Music does well in the options; we are a very musical school.

The existence of the *section bilingue* means that no-one (staff, parents or pupils) has ever seriously challenged our policy of making French a 'core' subject for all up to 16+. (It is nice to see that the latest HMI consultative paper has now caught up with us. Kenneth Baker was impressed when he came here on a flying visit.) This policy helps the other languages. We manage German and Spanish up to 'A' level (the former emerging from the top band, the latter from the middle band).

Conclusion

My view, after some 15 years, is that the *section bilingue* programme has sharpened up the brighter pupils, extended expectations and improved performance. One effect of this stretching is that the abler pupils respond to other challenges, outside the French classroom, more confidently. I do not feel guilty about our 'elitist' approach since our other pupils get a 'good deal' and plenty of attention.

I would add that the existence of the *section bilingue* helps staff recruitment. We have no problems filling modern language vacancies. Of course we have an excellent head of department.

MILL HILL SCHOOL

William Winfield

Mill Hill is an independent school of some 480 boys, in North West London, of whom about two thirds are boarders. Over half arrive at age thirteen from local preparatory schools but an increasing number come from abroad, over thirty countries commonly being represented. In addition twenty boys, often from primary or comprehensive schools, join at twelve plus. French is a core subject to 'O' level, German an option taken by about half the annual entry. The modern languages department has consistently tried to maintain an imaginative approach to its work, teaching by direct method using French and German textbooks. Previous directors of the department have included former HM Staff Inspector for modern languages Mervyn Wigram and the late Michael Brown, who launched the section bilingue and with whom the present director worked until Mr Brown's tragically premature death in 1975. The scheme of work was set out in Mr Winfield's article in our first edition (1978) as follows:

(Two groups of pupils form the *section bilingue*. Group 1 (the 'History in French' group) being of higher ability than Group 2 (the 'Geography in French' group).

Programme of history and geography in French from thirteen plus

		<i>Lessons per week</i>
Group 1 - Set A French		
First year thirteen plus	Basic French course	5
	Extra French conversation lessons	2
Second year fourteen plus	Basic French course	5
	Geography in French (<i>Geographie et 3e - Bordas</i>)	2
Third year fifteen plus	History in French (<i>Histoire en 3e - Nathan</i>)	2
	(History in English)	3
	Begin 'A' level French course (Associated Examining Board)	4
		Four weeks in French school in March, including geo- graphy field work project. Sit 'O' level French examina- tion. Sit 'O' level history examina- tion - three papers, including one special syllabus in French: Europe in 19th century, examined in French

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Fourth year sixteen plus	Continue 'A' level French course for summer examinations	3 This is supplementary to candidates three main 'A' level choice; excludes those choosing French as a main subject
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Group 2 - Geography set

First year thirteen plus	Basic French course	5	
	Extra French conversation lessons	2	
Second year fourteen plus	Basic French course	5	Two year geography course to 'O' level: half English, half French. Field study project in France in summer holidays
	Geography in French (Géographie en 4e - Bordas)	2	
	(Géographie en 3e - Bordas)	2	
	Geography in English	2	
Third year fifteen plus	Above continued	5	Sit 'O' level French
		2	Sit 'O' level geography. Half examined in English; half examined in French

An example of a question set for the History in French paper by the Oxford and Cambridge Board 'O' level 1976

La monarchie bourgeoise

Depuis 1830, de quoi avons-nous été accusés, mes amis et moi en particulier, par les défenseurs du parti de l'ancien régime, dans leurs journaux, dans leurs écrits? De vouloir constituer ce qu'on appelait le régime de la classe moyenne...

Je suis fidèle aujourd'hui à l'idée politique qui m'a dirigé toute ma vie. Oui, aujourd'hui comme en 1817, comme en 1820, comme en 1830, je veux, je cherche, je sers de tout mon pouvoir la prépondérance politique des classes moyennes en France, l'organisation définitive et régulière de cette grande victoire qu'elles ont remportée sur le privilège et sur le pouvoir absolu de 1789 à 1830... Mais je veux que cette prépondérance soit stable et honorable et pour cela il faut que les classes moyennes ne soient ni violentes et anarchiques, ni envieuses et subalternes.

Guizot, Discours à la Chambre des Députés, le 3 mai 1837.

- (a) *Ecrivez quelques lignes sur la carrière de Guizot.* (3)
- (b) *Quelles sont les raisons pour lesquelles on peut considérer la période entre 1830 et 1848 'le régime de la classe moyenne'?* (3)

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- (c) *Quels groupes ou individus constituaient 'les défenseurs du parti de l'ancien régime' après 1830?* (2)
- (d) *Entre la défaite de Napoléon et l'époque où parlait Guizot, quelles victoires avaient été remportées sur 'le privilège et sur le pouvoir absolu'?* (2)

Examples of questions set for the Geography in French paper by the Oxford and Cambridge Board 'O' level 1976

1. *Expliquez quatre des affirmations suivantes:*
 - (a) *la pêche constitue la seule activité de l'Islande.*
 - (b) *le Danemark est avant tout un pays d'élevage.*
 - (c) *en Finlande, les glaciers ont laissé un pays tout en creux et en bosses.*
 - (d) *la Suède a toujours été à l'avant-garde de l'industrie métallurgique.*
 - (e) *la première richesse de la Norvège est la flotte marchande.*
 - (f) *la proximité du cercle polaire a des conséquences importantes pour la vie quotidienne des habitants.* (6,6,6,6)
2.
 - (a) *Dessinez un croquis des pays du Caucase montrant le relief, les républiques fédérées, les villes industrielles, la mer Noire, la mer Caspienne.* (6)
 - (b) *En vous référant au climat et à la végétation, faites une comparaison des cultures de la côte orientale de la mer Noire et de la côte occidentale de la mer Caspienne.* (9)
 - (c) *Choisissez trois des villes industrielles que vous avez marquées sur le croquis et pour chacune, exposez les avantages pour l'industrie.* (9)

(In the following paper Mr Winfield brings up to date his account of the section bilingue at Mill Hill, now in its sixteenth year.)

Since the publication of *Intensive language teaching in schools* in 1978 geography and history have continued to be taught in French and examined at 'O' level by the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board. In the light of our experience we are even more convinced of the benefits of studying subjects in a foreign language so that the language is seen by pupils as essentially a means of communication rather than an end in itself. In addition we have strengthened our links abroad so that all those studying a *section bilingue* subject are able to spend up to three weeks in France at age 13/14.

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For a short period we also experimented with a similar approach in German, setting up a course entitled *Deutschlandkunde* which was taken by smaller groups of pupils in their 'O' level year. One 40-minute period per week was allocated to the course (borrowed from the German allocation) and there was no specific examination target. After two years however we were forced to abandon the experiment. The course, partly based on German school textbooks, was certainly linguistically viable despite the late start our pupils had in German. But a general reorganisation of the school's 13-16 curriculum had led to a significant reduction in time allocation for German (14 periods over three years being cut to 11) and with regret it was decided that the gains in motivation and oral/aural ability did not adequately compensate for the loss in learning time required for the then traditional 'O' level target.

A similar curriculum change, although less savage, also affected French, but the influence on the *section bilingue* was less immediate. The majority of the boys who come to us at 13+ have already completed at least three years of French in their preparation for the Common Entrance examination so that the time factor is clearly less significant, even if we wish to prepare up to 40 boys for an early 'O' level and thereafter the 'AO' Additional French examination. French has also remained a core subject with the status which that position entails. Despite the reduction in periods in French the allocations for *section bilingue* subjects have remained the same: four periods for geography or history divided equally between teaching in English and French. At the same time both subjects were made free options. When that became a less than practical proposition as numbers veered dramatically from year to year (35 would-be historians one year, five geographers the next!) the decision was taken to create so-called 'guided' options enabling the correct numbers to be contrived but at the expense of pupils' wishes and expectations. What by 1976 had been established as a firm-footed *section bilingue* was by the early 1980s threatening to become a lame duck.

The changing curriculum

It is only recently, however, that the changes in curriculum patterns and subject status have begun to affect us in more subtle ways. The newer subjects, such as economics, electronics, computing, have begun to make a serious challenge for pupils' allegiances and it has been the more traditional option areas (Latin, geography, history, etc) which have tended to suffer. This interesting trend is reflected to an even greater extent at Sixth form level: this year (1987/88) 63% of all 'A' level students are taking either economics or business studies with corresponding reductions in most hitherto established subjects. The pattern for the future is clear: vocational areas will thrive together with subjects which stress their practical application to later needs in life.

The most fundamental change in the nature of the *section bilingue* since 1978 has occurred in the syllabus content of our two subjects. As new approaches in methodology in history and geography have established themselves our original syllabuses, conceived in the early 1970s, have become more and more antediluvian. The *cours magistral* approach which we had

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inherited from the French secondary system (our textbooks have always been the standard ones used in French schools) became far too inflexible for what in England was quickly developing into a pupil-orientated pedagogy.

The first subject to change was Geography in French. The regional approach (covering Western Europe only) was replaced by a thematic one: agriculture, population and industry were studied within the contexts of the developing and the developed world. Thus subsistence farming and cash crops in Burundi were set against the mechanised methods of North America; the vibrant demography of West African countries was compared with the relatively stagnant population figures of the Soviet Union; traditional and modern industries in the Republic of Congo and the US Manufacturing Belt were examined and analysed. In the process of revising the syllabus we had lost all contact with France itself, one of the major parts of our previous syllabus, but had gained considerably in the breadth of our geographical response. It was clearer to pupils that what they were studying, albeit in French, was indeed geography and those colleagues who had, naively or cynically, seen the *section bilingue* as yet another way for the linguists to gain more teaching time, were now conspicuous by their silence. Above all, the new syllabus was conceived by geographers for geographers. It led directly to 'A' level concepts and took geography out of its traditional mould. It remained the case, nevertheless, that linguists became pseudo-geographers in order to teach the subject, and not the other way round. The new syllabus was first examined in 1983 (the O & C Board) and sat for the last time in June 1987, with the demise of GCE.

Changes occurred, too, in the History in French syllabus. These were equally fundamental, moving from the old-style factual digestion and regurgitation to a much more analytical approach which set great store by empathy and critical awareness. Nineteenth century Europe, previously taught in French, was replaced by the period between the two world wars. The requirement of the submission of course work (normally an extended essay in French based on original documents and treating an aspect of Occupied France) was a further move towards a much more pupil-orientated approach and involved individual research in the foreign language 'in situ'. In practical terms this meant exploiting archives of appropriate material whilst our pupils were on exchange. It was no mean feat for 14-year olds in a foreign country to request permission to see original documents from the *Gestapo* in Rouen! The new history syllabus was first examined in 1986 and was to a large extent the model for the GCSE submission in history due for examination in 1988.

The changes in syllabus have undoubtedly been successful in countering the various criticisms made, both within and outside the school, of the excessively traditional nature of the material we had evolved when first launching the *section bilingue*. It can be said that by the mid 1980s the Mill Hill initiative had ceased to be an experiment and was now in the same position as all established subject areas, having to fight its corner in the face of competition from other schemes and having to keep itself in tune with all relevant educational developments. On a wider scale, what was distressing for us was the succession of visits from outside interested parties who went away full of admiration but shaking their heads at the impossibility of setting up a similar scheme. The

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honourable exception has been the Surrey Heathside initiative (described by Frances Morley in this section) and we are particularly pleased to have been in close personal and professional contact with those responsible for its successful inauguration.

Difficulties

The transition from experimental to routine subject has imposed all-round difficulties. Apart from considerations of curriculum already mentioned, the demands made upon the linguist teachers by the new syllabus have necessitated a great deal more preparation. It remains the case that only two members of the French department are regular *section bilingue* teachers and we still have not found the colleague with a mixed degree and genuine expertise in both spheres. The only solution is for the linguist to become an experienced geographer or historian aware of all the changes (and the terminology!) that have occurred in the wake of the GCSE revolution. In addition, as the syllabuses have become orientated towards more sophisticated geographical and historical concepts, the linguistic element has become inevitably more difficult for the pupils. Paradoxically, this has become all the more evident since the national criteria for modern languages changed our approach so that we are now obsessed with the authentic and communicative to the detriment of other equally important areas of language learning. Pupils who, in French, now spend a much greater part of their time than hitherto practising oral and aural skills are of course even better equipped to deal with the demands of a 40-minute *section bilingue* lesson given entirely in the foreign language. However, these same pupils are being asked to read unedited historical documents, prepare a short essay on population trends or express in written form their empathy with a given historical period or event; it is not surprising that they should find some of these tasks impossibly at variance with their language experience. In grossly exaggerated terms which nevertheless give a fair indication of our growing problems, the child who has learnt with total authenticity to obtain a railway ticket or book camp site accommodation in perfect French is quite bewildered by an eye-witness account (i.e. an authentic secondary source) of the negotiations between Hitler, Chamberlain and Daladier at Munich in 1938. Clearly, we have somehow to match the requirements of authenticity in history studies with authenticity in French. If we do not, pupil morale in the *section bilingue* will fall and our original aim of language motivation will recede traumatically.

The new GCSE criteria

Shortly after introducing the new syllabuses in geography and history we began to consider the implications of the new GCSE criteria. History was first to be submitted in 1985 and after much helpful discussion with representatives of the Midland Examining Group a syllabus in History in French was approved for examination for the GCSE in June 1988. The first group of eighteen pupils is now in the second year of the course, with a second group following. Final

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approval from the SEC has yet to be obtained, although we are confident of achieving this in the next few months.

The pattern of the new examination in history is very much that of the former 'O' level syllabus: approximately half the syllabus is taught and examined in French, the remainder being conducted in English. The syllabus is a limited grade one (A - D).

The aims of the syllabus naturally follow the national criteria for history but add the following exceptional notion:

to transcend the subject barriers, help create bilingual Europeans, present material from varied points of view and seek to widen the skills of the historian by making use of sources in a foreign language and from a foreign country. In this syllabus a foreign language is to be used as a vehicle for another discipline.

The syllabus clearly underlines therefore that French is to be used as a means of communication but is not an assessment objective.

The core content of the syllabus, taught and examined in English, covers 'International Relations since the First World War'. The European part of the syllabus, taught in French, covers developments in European countries between the wars with special reference to France and to the theme of contrasting ideologies. The areas specifically covered are Russia 1917-41, Italy 1919-39, Germany 1919-39 and France 1919-44.

In the examination the core content counts for 40% of the overall marks. This is a Mode I paper, identical to that set by MEG as 'The Modern World, 1914 to the Present Day', and comprises 30 compulsory short-answer questions and a choice of two out of five structured questions. European History is examined in French in a Mode III paper accounting for a further 30% of the marks. Section A is to consist of five structured questions of which candidates must answer two. Section B is to be a compulsory structured question making use of source material. Candidates will also be required to submit two pieces of coursework in French. One will be intended to assess empathy; the other will deal specifically with the theme 'occupied France 1940-44' and will assess objective 4: *to interpret and evaluate a wide range of historical sources and their use as evidence*. The word limits for the totality of the coursework are minimum 1500 and maximum 4500. The two pieces of coursework will carry 30% of the total marks.

It is too early to make anything but a tentative appraisal of this syllabus and of the reaction of pupils and those teaching it. The general impressions after one year of preparation is that it is both linguistically and historically taxing and ideally requires more than the four periods allocated over each of the two years if any kind of satisfactory depth of study is to be attained. This first group's ability in French is high: in June 1987 fifteen out of eighteen pupils gained A grades in the early 'O' level examination. But, taught for two years using *Tricolore* as a basic course book, they are showing the inevitable symptoms cited above of the lack of correlation between registers of language. The situation will doubtless improve over the year and many of these boys already show good historical awareness in their lessons in English. We have

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also in this second year provided a fifth period (at the expense of their 'AO' Additional French allocation) which should ease the problems of time.

A set-back

In January 1987 two further syllabuses were submitted for GCSE examination in 1989. The submissions concerned Geography in French and Economics in French (both of which we consider to be more easily adaptable than history to teaching through the medium of French relying as they do upon data, maps and the like). They were made to the London and East Anglian Group. LEAG was preferred to MEG for these two syllabuses as we had been attracted by the former's conventional GCSE syllabuses and had based our submissions on them to a large extent. It was with considerable surprise and dismay that eight months later we received an outright rejection of both syllabuses. Unlike our experience with MEG there had been no process of discussion in the meantime. The reply from LEAG cited three main reasons for rejection: firstly, that except in specifically foreign language examinations it was felt that the medium of communication in GCSE should be English; secondly, the fear was expressed that attainment in a subject would be depressed by 'problems varying in degree from one candidate to another of the second language' and therefore grades could not be awarded fairly; lastly, the practical problem of finding moderators who were subject specialists and also sufficiently fluent in French was evoked. To our chagrin therefore history will be the only subject for which we can prepare candidates in the *section bilingue* for GCSE in the immediate future. We are left, of course, with the possibility of re-writing our courses and submitting them to an alternative examining group. No decision has yet been made on that score.

Future uncertain

Thus the state of play and future of the Mill Hill *section bilingue* in late 1987 are uncertain. For the present we shall maintain History in French, but the fall in numbers of pupils experiencing this kind of approach to language exploitation will soon begin to take its toll. Ironically, the philosophy of emphasising the communicative priority of language learning which our *section bilingue* set out to pursue more than fifteen years ago has become overwhelmingly accepted today. To an extent the new courses (*Tricolore* readily springs to mind) achieve that philosophy without all the entanglements of the dual approach. Yet even the new examination in modern languages is not safe from criticism: its authenticity is inevitably seen by some pupils as artificial and unsophisticated, intellectually unexciting and limited in scope. To study another subject through the medium of a second language undoubtedly counters such criticisms.

If I have emphasised many of the problems which have formed the framework of our daily existence within the *section bilingue* at Mill Hill it is nevertheless with a degree of optimism and confidence that we face the future. When we started the experiment in 1972 we had no notion of the influence it

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was to have on methodology and the interest it was to arouse in so many quarters. That relatively few schools have found the resources and teachers to implement their own *section bilingue* is obviously a matter of regret to us, convinced as we are of the advantages. Our pupils' awareness of the usefulness of a foreign language is enhanced, they understand readily the value of bilingualism in the professional and recreational world beyond school. There is no doubt, too, that language learning is supported, especially in the more passive skills of aural comprehension and reading. In conjunction with an extended exchange, the *section bilingue* has been largely responsible for guaranteeing the success of the 40% of our pupils who attempt the early 'O' level. Many go on to prepare French as a fourth 'A' level subject taken in the Lower Sixth. (During the period 1983-87, 27 candidates have sat the O & C 'A' level examination one year early using subsidiary subject time; of the 27 candidates, 24 have passed, 9 gaining A or B grades - this in addition to our customary twenty or more candidates each year in the Upper Sixth.) The number of those at Mill Hill taking 'A' level in a foreign language remains high despite the increasing squeeze from other subjects and half a dozen a year go on to read languages for a degree course. Many of these would be less well prepared were it not for the *section bilingue*.

In conclusion, we at Mill Hill are still profoundly attached to the fundamental tenets of our scheme. Developments in modern languages have ensured that teachers throughout the country have moved towards the communicative philosophy without, nevertheless, superseding the *section bilingue* method. It still remains the case that Europeans of this generation should be able to understand and speak at least one other language in formal and informal contexts. Our *section bilingue* provides us with a unique way of achieving such an ideal for at least a privileged handful of our pupils.

I am grateful to my colleague Mr A H Armstrong for his help in the preparation of a part of the material for this article.

HEATHSIDE SCHOOL

Birth of a *section bilingue*

Frances Morley

Heathside School is a county maintained comprehensive school in Surrey. In April 1986 Frances Morley was appointed as coordinator to set up a section bilingue in the school. She was given the summer term free from teaching commitments to prepare the ground. Potential pupil participants had to be targeted, criteria for selection discussed, parents informed and timetabling planned. The County language advisers, school Head of languages, Head of geography and Headmaster had already spent some months in discussion and had contacted various GCE Boards. A section bilingue was envisaged spanning years 3, 4 and 5 of the secondary course, with years 4 and 5 devoted to a specially negotiated GCSE. Frances Morley describes the first year of this three-year programme (l'année de base).

Aims

The aim was to provide through the *section bilingue* a valid foreign language experience and to learn another discipline through the medium of French.

Why French and why geography? French was chosen for the traditional reason that it is the most accessible. Access to France would be an important element in the course. The Head of geography was positive, if perhaps slightly less convinced than the linguists but prepared to support the objectives. The deciding factor in our choice of geography as the discipline to be studied through the medium of French was that the GYSL (Geography for the Young School Leaver) scheme was well established in the school. This is a course based on practical skills, using observation, data, photographs and investigations in the field and lending itself to use of the foreign language. The Southern Examination Group officers were most helpful and our draft for a *section bilingue* French/Geography syllabus Mode 3 was accepted, after much discussion, for dual certification in GCSE, the first cohort to begin the two-year course in September 1987.

The plan

The GCSE dual certificate in French/Geography is modular in structure. The five modules are:

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Year 4:	Urban study Work and employment Physical geography
Year 5:	Field study Developing world

There are five assessments, beginning in the spring term of year 4. The skills assessed in French are carefully built up. For example the earlier modules allow more marks for listening skills because these need to be better developed at this stage than reading skills. Only grades A to E are available.

To teach this programme I was allotted six periods per week (each of 35 minutes). (My sixth period during the *année de base* had to be arranged during the pupils' lunch break. The pupils were made aware of this arrangement at the time when they chose the course. One advantage of this was that the French assistant was free to help me during the lunch period!) In years 4 and 5 my six periods will come out of normal option time.

Preparations

My appointment to coordinate the *section bilingue* was as a linguist who would feel relaxed in using the foreign language and who was receptive to the ideas of the GYSL course. Some training as a geographer was necessary! The Surrey County organiser for geography (Paula Richardson) formed part of the Surrey team of four with whom I went to Strasbourg on a DES/CBVE course for linguists and humanities advisers/teachers who helped each other with specific skills. In Strasbourg I was also able to visit some *sections bilingues*.

As a result of our visit to Strasbourg we were able to make decisions about recruitment of pupils for the course. In Surrey pupils transfer to secondary school at the age of twelve, having all completed at least one year of French in their middle schools. On arrival at Heathside (in the traditional second year of secondary education) they are introduced to German. Six periods of language are divided between French and German on a rotating basis.

We introduced the *section bilingue* in the following way: Towards the end of year one, i.e. after two years of French, pupils were given a 'taster' of a geography lesson in French. Then pupils and parents were invited to an information evening about the *section bilingue* project after which pupils were invited to apply to join the course.

Nearly 90 pupils applied from the year group of approximately 150. We decided that it was feasible to run two groups, one from each of the two broad bands of ability into which the year was divided. 27 pupils came from one band and 20 from the other. The proportion of boys to girls was 19 : 28 in a year which contained more girls than boys.

In selecting the pupils we are interested in their motivation and aptitude for languages. We are able to take into account their approach to the new language, German, their performance in geography, English, mathematics and science.

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Each pupil was interviewed as part of a small group and then individually after which a letter was sent to the homes of those accepted, as well as those not chosen. Contact with parents has been an important aspect of the plan from the beginning, with regular meetings (information evenings and 'teach-ins') being well attended.

One of the assurances given to parents during the initial year (and to pupils and colleagues) was that some pupils might discontinue the course at the end of one year. In the event, at the end of the year, I excluded seven pupils out of the 47 who began, because I felt that the nature of the GCSE examination (dual certificate A to E grade) would make unfair demands on them. Some of the seven would have wished to continue and I would hope that in future, with a modified examination, I would be able to accept such pupils.

Teaching materials and resources

An important consideration from the inception of the scheme was the choice and provision of suitable teaching materials and other resources. Finding teaching materials proved less difficult than we had anticipated. The basic course reference book for the geography part of the course was a French middle school (CM) *géographie* text-book. This contains the necessary vocabulary and is clear and attractively illustrated. I could not find a *géographie* text-book in French for the relevant age-group in the French system (French *quatrième*) which was not too daunting in density of text etc. As it was, several months elapsed before many of the pupils felt confident enough to tackle a French text. It was not easy to produce my own materials because I was committed to a teaching programme in French and German elsewhere in the school. However, much visual material was used, borrowed from the parallel geography classes, with my own commentary in French (OHP acetates with French titles and *légendes*, etc). Work sheets were produced on the photocopier. Inevitably more time was spent on geography than the two lessons per week of the parallel groups. Repetition and support was needed by many of the *section bilingue* pupils and it took time for them to accept that they were learning new ideas and concepts in geography wholly through the French language. They were, of course, absorbing French all the time during their lessons.

I was able to economise in time by using *Studio 16A* as a course book. I made copies of the tapes and each pupil kept a tape at home. Frequently homework was a listening comprehension exercise. Pressure on speed of understanding was thus relieved and the added practice at home reinforced pupils' progress at listening.

A further appeal of this course book was that its chapters on *le français dans le monde* reinforced the wide geographical theme and emphasised French as a means of communication.

An invaluable source of help and materials was the French Institute, with its library of audio materials, books and videos. The French Institute also permitted access to resources from the *Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique* in France.

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I was supplied by Surrey County with a video recorder which I took with me to France and which provided important material (after editing). The pupils accepted lack of sophistication in filming technique which was compensated for by the immediacy of the material.

We also used material from ITV and BBC language courses. I found *A vous la France* of particular help although I would appreciate some method of excluding the English sub-titles.

The Central Bureau, which had been helpful, with the DES, in organising the Strasbourg course, also organised a course at Montpellier which I attended. Robert Ferras, professor of geography at the university of Montpellier, visited our school and gave much theoretical and practical advice in addition to finding time to teach each group and accompanying us on our field-study day. The advantages for me personally were enormous but the pupils, too, if initially daunted, were flattered to see, hear and understand a French geography professor!

Language and personal development

The pupils became accustomed to differing approaches and varying accents and registers of language, as I used the French assistant both for individual back-up and in team teaching, while visitors to the class became a frequent occurrence, to the extent that the pupils ignored their presence or remained unperturbed. One prestigious visitor was surprised at being asked: *Est-ce que tu peux voir l'écran? - bref, passons.*

If our aim was to break down artificial barriers and to use language for communication then comments such as: 'I don't think I'm going to a *section bilingue* lesson any more, I think of it as a geography lesson' would seem to indicate progress in the right direction.

This was not our only aim, however. We saw personal development and confidence as an important by-product. We hoped there would be a gain not only for the individual but for the school and the community at large.

The most rewarding candidates are not necessarily the highest achievers, but those pupils who initially doubted their ability to cope with the course and who demonstrated, with an increasing relaxation of tension, their understanding of quite complex judgements and skills, e.g.:

*Quels sont les facteurs qui déterminent la situation des industries?
Construisez un graphique qui montre l'utilisation agricole de la région.
Il y a quelques années il y avait beaucoup de centrales thermiques;
aujourd'hui il y en a moins. Pourquoi? Donnez vos raisons.*

It also requires a vocabulary and manipulation of language which would make a nonsense of having to plough through basic as well as extended level papers in the conventional GCSE language paper.

The differentiation in our dual certificate is by task and questions with an incline of difficulty. The course work and assignments are common to all

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candidates. We want our tasks/questions to demonstrate what pupils know, understand and can do.

Tentative conclusions

Without the total support of the Headmaster of the school the project would not have been feasible. The county adviser for modern languages, Roger Bailess, was also a tower of strength and practical help, sometimes joining me in team teaching. He and Peter Satchwell both provided support of great value in what was, of necessity, a somewhat isolated position in the school in the first year, since no-one else was responsible for the *section bilingue* teaching.

Other impressions must be very tentative.

Motivation was an important criterion in accepting the pupils for the course. But motivation needs to be stimulated and interest maintained. I tried to do this by keeping the pupils fully informed about the development of the course and their own progress, and whether or not as a group we were achieving the goals that I discussed with them. The majority accepted the challenge, with varying degrees of confidence. On several occasions, when I had taught the *section bilingue* groups a lesson, for example on map reading, in French, I gave them the same assessment test as their peers learning geography in English. The results helped to demonstrate to me, my colleagues, but above all to the pupils that they were making progress.

I was encouraged by two main achievements during the first year. First of all the concentration levels of all pupils improved - but most dramatic was the improvement amongst the weaker members of the group. To effectively instill the methods and 'tools' for study the lessons were heavily 'didactic'. I wanted them to work in French, but they could not do that without a minimum command of vocabulary and structures. For this reason my lessons were less 'task' based than I hope will be the case in the future. In the early stages, if pupils were asked to work as a group, English was the medium of communication amongst themselves. I wanted to avoid this being a pattern - but the groups were too large to allow me to be everywhere. Thus they had to concentrate and listen.

LISTENING

This was the second most dramatic gain - listening skills improved daily. I had been careful to encourage them from the beginning to indulge in 'gist' listening and to ask if they had a problem. (*Pardon, Madame, je ne comprends pas! Comment dit-on en anglais la superficie? etc.*) I reassured them that a request to repeat information would be welcomed and that no opprobrium was attached to lack of understanding, only to a lack of request for help. The variety of voices heard (assistants, visitors) exposed pupils to a variety of accents. This soon made little difference; aural comprehension was good. But now we encountered the first great difficulty. This I discovered to be the burning desire to communicate ideas or thoughts in Geography/French lessons and the frustration and disappointment when they could not reach the same level of

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speaking competence as they could in listening. This continues to be a frustration but, as in first language acquisition, it is being gradually overcome. Greater knowledge, vocabulary, mastery of past and simple future tenses all contribute to remedy this.

READING

A similar progression, although less dramatic than the improvement in listening skills, ensued in the reading comprehension. Initially the listening skill was the only source of information. They had to listen and watch - no course book or reference book was available that they could readily understand. The illustrated material - graphs, pictures, maps, etc in their *Géographie* book was easy to cope with, but the accompanying page of written information, intended for French children, would have been too daunting in the early stages. By the end of the second term, however, I was able to give this 'reading' page as a homework while still reassuring them to read for 'gist comprehension'. As we would have previously discussed the ideas contained on the page, confidence again increased and they were able to enjoy finding out information. Independent reading is an area of achievement and enjoyment which I look forward to expanding. I am sure I do not ask them to read for themselves enough.

WRITING

The skill of 'writing' is more complex. These children were in year 3 of secondary school (although in their second year with us) aged 13/14 years. They performed in the *section bilingue* classes all the traditional writing exercises of gap filling, simple letter writing, etc as required by the relevant course book. For the *Géographie* lessons the task was more complex. Often I would ask them to work in groups to discuss an idea or problem and then each group would report back (usually via the most confident spokesman, although I tried to vary this) and all ideas would be assembled on the OHP. From this we would put together as a group a relevant short passage to accompany the task - graph, picture, map, etc - which helped to illustrate our topic. Towards the end of term 3 I felt able to say *Maintenant, comme devoir, faites-moi une liste de vos idées, mais si possible écrivez des phrases plutôt qu'une liste*. The *liste* was forthcoming from all, but a significant majority produced a well thought-out paragraph, well expressed, with few mistakes. I had hesitated to do this earlier for although I wanted the geography topics to be recorded in their exercise books it seemed counter-productive for them to be expressed in incorrect French! I am encouraged to think that the skill of writing at the end of the foundation year can be built on for the GCSE course. (It is worth remembering, however, that candidates are not penalised for incorrect English in the normal GCSE geography examination.)

I see gains in the pupils' learning although it is not an even gain. All have benefited, I feel sure, as have the staff, by the breaking down of artificial barriers between subjects and disciplines and the common goals that are

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reached in general educational terms by pupils and staff, through discussion and negotiation.

COOKERY AND GEOGRAPHY IN FRENCH

Helen Whiter

Blessed George Napier School, Oxfordshire

The Blessed George Napier School, Banbury, Oxfordshire, is a four-form entry mixed secondary school of some 600 pupils, with an age range from 11 to 18 and a very small Sixth form. The school is voluntary aided, Roman Catholic, serving a very mixed catchment area, part rural, part small town. The language department (2.8 members of staff) had no native speaking assistant during the year of the project. It is not particularly well resourced. Tricolore is the main textbook used and the department is currently changing from traditional to more 'communicative' methodology.

The school's geography teacher, supported by Helen Whiter, then on secondment to Westminster College, Oxford, undertook an experiment which consisted in teaching geography and cookery for a year to one class, in French, in addition to their normal allocation of French lessons.

The project is particularly interesting, not only because it is the only known example of a section bilingue where cookery has been taught through the medium of French, but because, uniquely, the pupils chosen for the experiment were in their first year at the school. Thus their first contact with the foreign language was via their geography and cookery classes.

Helen Whiter is now a county language inspector for Cambridgeshire.

What is most encouraging about this project is that it was seen by all concerned to be exceptionally successful and yet it involved minimal additional funding and very little in terms of extra time for meetings etc. Its success was more due to the commitment of the teachers involved, the support given by the whole staff and, of course, the enthusiastic co-operation of the pupils.

The initial idea came from the school's geography teacher. He is a highly competent French speaker and for the year previous to the project had been teaching some French. During that year he became increasingly aware of how much more meaningful it would be for pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills through the medium of French rather than simply having lessons in the language itself. Ever since working in Canada I had been interested in immersion methods and was keen to be involved. At the time I was seconded to work at Westminster College, Oxford, and there was therefore some flexibility in my teaching programme.

We made one visit (funded by TRIST - In-service training related to the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative scheme promoted by the

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Manpower Services Commission) to Goff's School, Hertfordshire, to observe the working of their *section bilingue* and to talk with the teachers concerned. Then, after some further discussions, we made our plan, which was to work with a first year class. I had some reservations about this at the time because I felt that we might make faster progress if the pupils already had the basic foundations on which we could build. Looking back I now have no doubt at all that we made the right decision. Precisely because they had no previous experience of a foreign language the pupils were not inhibited by the idea that what they said might not be acceptable. They were much more willing and able to experiment and try out French in a way similar to that of the child acquiring the first language.

It was obvious that geography must be one of the subjects taught in French. We were anxious that there should be a second, practical subject involved and we eventually decided on cookery as the subject for me to teach, mainly because it was the only practical skill I could handle. It was decided that geography should have the normal time allocation in the first year (1 hour 40 minutes per week) and that one hour for cookery should be taken from the allocation for French. (The cookery was, in fact, taught on alternate weeks to half the class with a drama/role-play session alternating for the other half class). In addition, during the year, the history and music teachers also taught some lessons in French.

Thus the class had the following exposure to French during the year:

Normal French lessons : 3 x 40 minutes	}	
Cookery/role-play; one hour	}	per week
Geography; 1 hour 40 minutes	}	

The syllabus

In geography most of the work was based on France but the programme covered the same skills and concepts as for the other first year classes who were learning their geography in English. The approach was very much activity centred. Two French primary textbooks were used as starting point; these were: *Porte Ouverte sur la Géographie* CM livret 1 + 2, published by Classiques Hachette.

To supplement this the teacher produced much additional material of his own. During the year he also invited to the school some local French nationals to talk to the class about various aspects of living in France.

In cookery most of the lessons were organised around preparing a simple French dish. We also did some basic work on healthy eating and shopping for food in France. Because of the short time available we concentrated mainly on starters, snacks and desserts, for example *croissants farcis*; *salade d'oranges*; *bananes flambées*; *bananes suisses*; *truffes au chocolat*, etc.

Each lesson consisted of a demonstration, followed by preparation of the dish by the pupils themselves. On a couple of occasions, towards the end of the year, I simply gave the pupils the recipe in French, with no help, and they managed well. Halfway through the year we spent an afternoon at the local Technical College, where the Head of the Catering Department conducted a

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session in French and our pupils worked alongside his students as they prepared an *à la carte* meal.

Use of French

From the very start the teachers always spoke French to the pupils (though I admit that if I felt that there was real danger like a pupil knocking over a saucepan of boiling water, I did use English, but this was very rare). The pupils' level of comprehension developed rapidly. For the first few weeks we allowed the pupils to speak to us in English. Gradually we encouraged them to use as much French as they could but we accepted a period of 'franglais'. It was not, in fact, until about halfway through the year that their spoken French took off. It had presumably taken that time for them to internalise enough to start using it creatively. They certainly put together what they wanted to say in a way identical to that of a child learning its own language and on some occasions produced bits of French that most Fifth formers would be unable to produce. By the end of the year they were still producing language in the natural way, but they were also starting to 'monitor' what they were saying and apply, in their monitoring, what they had learnt in their French language lessons. They were extremely confident in using the language and they developed a whole range of communication strategies.

It would be difficult to give a precise answer to the question: how did the pupils' mastery of French compare with that of the other pupils who had followed traditional teaching in the language? At times the language they understood and produced seemed to approach that normally found at Fifth or Sixth form level while occasionally they were stumped by something a normal second year would understand. A rough estimate might be that in listening comprehension they reached the level of above average ability fourth/fifth years. In reading comprehension they were about third/fourth year standard after one year, though in restricted areas of vocabulary.

Writing and speaking are less easy to categorise. Much of the writing in the two subject areas, geography and cookery (recipes, mapwork) was copywriting. On the occasions when they did any writing of their own French, in geography, they probably achieved a good second year level, more ambitious than the average second year, if less accurate. Speaking skills bore no relation to that of pupils taught in the conventional way because they were called on to use the language quite differently and (for the first two terms at least) we tolerated 'franglais' in ways that in conventional classrooms would not be welcome.

Balance sheet

Throughout the year the pupils were exceptionally motivated and very positive about the experience. At the end we felt that there had been no loss in terms of content or skills (in geography and cookery) while the gains in language competence had been enormous.

There were also gains for us and for me in particular. As a language teacher I thought I would have no problems with timing lessons, but it proved harder

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than I had anticipated. However, there is nothing like having to do most pupils' washing up because they had to rush off to catch a bus, to motivate one to get the timing right.

I also thought that I had got the giving of clear instructions down to a fine art, but the second lesson proved me wrong when quite a few pupils arrived with smashed eggs which they had brought in a plastic bag in their satchel. I also learned a lot about class management. I was fortunate to have a qualified Home Economics teacher available in case of emergency (to supervise me, really!) and I was grateful to have her there when we were using the gas and electricity rings and ovens. However, it would be perfectly possible to devise a programme which consisted of cold dishes which would raise no safety problems.

To sum up the lessons of this modest, one year project, which makes no claim to have been exactly monitored or evaluated (we were too busy 'having a go' together!) my conclusion is that there is considerable scope for presenting 'activity' subjects through the medium of French. Art seems an obvious choice, as does PE. In my previous school we did have a group who had a term of rugby football in French. Many language teachers must have a second subject which it could be quite appropriate to teach in French. I would encourage them to have a go!

'IMMERSION' IN CANADA AND WALES

A background note

Eric Hawkins

In a bilingual community, where two languages are in use side by side, in the media and for social and business purposes, some degree of 'immersion' in a second language obviously becomes a daily reality for many children. It is natural, therefore, for the question to be raised, cannot schools exploit 'immersion' as a language teaching technique?

Experience in the bilingual areas of Canada and Wales offers interesting comparisons.

The Canadian experience, paradoxically, is probably much better known to most language teachers in the UK than the developments closer to home in Wales. Many recent graduates will have read about the Canadian initiatives during initial training. Few recent developments in language teaching have had more publicity than the Canadian 'immersion' programmes.

An excellent account of the Canadian experience is given in *The Immersion Phenomenon*, a special number of *Language and Society* (No. 12, winter 1984) published by the Canadian Commissioner of Official languages, Max Yalden, whose office is at Ottawa, Canada K1A0T8. In this symposium some fourteen experts from Canadian schools and universities describe aspects of 'immersion' programmes and analyse the lessons of research.

The following note on immersion learning of French in Canada may be helpful for the reader coming new to the subject.

'Early' and 'late' immersion v. 'core French' or 'extended French'

According to H H Stern, founding director of the Ontario Institute Modern Language Centre

... immersion is now a household term for many families and educators in Canada. It is a phenomenon of English-speaking education systems and represents a determined attempt on the part of anglophones to overcome inveterate difficulties and inhibitions to learn French as a second language (quoted in the publication cited above).

The 'immersion' movement in Canadian schools began in 1965. The impetus came not from professional educators but from English-speaking parents'

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groups. Immersion was first thought of by a parents' group in St Lambert, near Montreal, who persuaded the Quebec Ministry of Education and the local school board to start an experiment in one school.

At the same time they had the good sense to demand that the experiment be monitored carefully. Professor W Lambert and his colleagues from McGill University took up the challenge and the research reports that have subsequently emerged from McGill and other researchers have made the project world-famous (cf. *Bilingual education of children: the St Lambert experiment* by W E Lambert and G R Tucker, 1972). The reported success of the early experiments encouraged rapid growth of the idea and immersion spread quickly, first in Ontario, particularly in Ottawa, and then across Canada from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island. By 1984 it was estimated that some 115,000 children in over 600 schools were learning French by some kind of immersion programme.

With few exceptions francophone educators in Canada have not chosen to teach English as a second language by immersion methods. Clearly the language issues are perceived differently by anglophone and francophone parents and teachers.

If comparisons are to be made between 'immersion' as it is understood in Canada and what we have been calling 'intensive teaching' or *sections bilingues* it is important to be clear about the Canadian form of 'immersion'.

Canadian educators distinguish between 'full' and 'partial' immersion. In 'full' immersion **all instruction** throughout the school day (with the single exception of English as a subject on the timetable) is given in French for at least one year, possibly two or three. After the full immersion years education becomes bilingual. In 'partial' immersion the proportion of instruction in French and in English remains approximately balanced from the outset.

A further distinction is made between three possible **stages** or starting times for immersion. There may be three different varieties:

- i. 'early immersion' starting at grade 1 (or in *Kindergarten*)
- ii. 'delayed' (or 'middle' or 'intermediate') immersion starting at grade 4
- iii. 'late' immersion starting at grade 6 or 7 (grade 4 would correspond generally to our age 10 and grade 7 to our age 13)

The term used in Canada to describe the conventional teaching of French as a subject in the timetable for four or five lessons per week is 'core French'.

The expression 'extended French' or 'intensive teaching' has come to be used to describe exactly what we have been calling *sections bilingues*, namely the teaching of **one** subject other than French, through the medium of the French language.

Typically, in 'early immersion' programmes, at the outset the only one who speaks French is the teacher, while the children use English.

.. students are permitted to interact among themselves and with their teacher in their home language, English. The teacher speaks only French to the students, using mime and body language to get the message across as

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required. Building from the existing language, interests and skills of the students, the teacher introduces vocabulary items and simple phrases initially for comprehension. The focus is on conveying content and responding to the substance of what students are saying...

Gradually, some time in grade 1 year, French becomes the working language of the class. The formal study of English is deferred, usually, until grade 3, and by about grade 5 the curriculum is taught half in French and half in English...

Although the instructional approach differs somewhat in programmes with a later starting grade ... it is based on the same principles: tolerance and appreciation of the home language, using the student's experience as a starting point for instruction, engaging in meaningful activities (e.g. field trips in French) and focusing on comprehension skills in the initial stages of the programme. (S Lapkin and M Swain, 1984)

A comparison with 'immersion in Latin' in the Tudor Grammar School

This account of immersion learning in the Canadian bilingual setting reminds us of the situation (briefly sketched in our Introduction p 4) of 'immersion' in Latin in the Tudor Grammar School. So long as Latin was in common use outside the school and so long as the need for Latin was accepted by parents and pupils alike, the programmes which the royal charters of the Tudor foundations strictly enjoined, and which are assumed in the great Comenius textbooks, were not questioned. In Canadian terms they would be called 'full immersion' programmes. The principle was that pupils were encouraged (though by rather more brutal methods than would nowadays be acceptable!) to use Latin for all purposes. In practice Latin teaching became (by the 17th century) rather more like 'partial immersion'. There is, however, another similarity between the two programmes which has had, perhaps, less attention than it merits. The Tudor Grammar Schools educated only a minority of pupils, a robust élite who had the ambition, the tenacity and the backing to survive the regime. The forced 'immersion' method of teaching Latin, effective as it was with the young Miltons of the age, did not work with all abilities or indeed with less willing scholars. The young Shakespeare, for all his genius, proved resistant to it!

The pupils whose parents initiated the Canadian programmes were also an élite. They were from anglophone families who aspired to professional careers for their children, who accepted the usefulness of mastery of French in the Canadian bilingual setting, and who were prepared to encourage their childrens' schooling to the utmost.

How effective is 'immersion'? The research balance sheet

Over two decades of immersion education much experience has been gathered on the merits as well as on the problems of this form of bilingual schooling. Immersion has also been the subject of a great deal of research from its early

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beginning to the present day. It is probably one of the most thoroughly investigated educational innovations. (H H Stern 1984)

The wealth of resources invested in research into 'immersion' in Canada contrasts sharply with the almost complete absence of any recent research in the UK into the effectiveness of intensive language teaching techniques.

On the Canadian experience the classical study is: *Bilingual education of children: the St Lambert experiment* by W E Lambert and G R Tucker, 1972. It was the positive nature of this and other studies of the St Lambert experiment that encouraged the spread of immersion methods.

More recent research reports and reviews are: *Evaluating bilingual education: a Canadian case study* by M Swain and S Lapkin, 1982, and 'Bilingual education of majority language children: the immersion experiment in review' by F Genesee, 1983, in *Applied Psycholinguistics* 4: 1-46. See also the articles on research in *The Immersion Phenomenon* (cited above p 72).

Researchers in Canada have asked mainly six questions about 'immersion':

- i. just how proficient do immersion pupils become in French?
- ii. is the pupils' first language, English, affected in any way?
- iii. what is the effect on other subjects such as maths or science, of studying them through the medium of French?
- iv. are there social/psychological effects of immersion, positive or negative, of which curriculum planners ought to be aware?
- v. is it only pupils of above average ability or aptitude for foreign language learning who profit from immersion?
- vi. is it only pupils from 'encouraging home backgrounds' who profit or can the method be generalised across the spectrum of children (the majority?) whose families are not supportive of academic schooling?

Out of the wealth of (sometimes conflicting) research findings, two views emerge on many of these questions.

The most widely accepted view, expressed for example in *Research update* by S Lapkin and M Swain (1984) is that research gives positive answers at least to the first four of our questions.

- i. **on proficiency in French:** when immersion pupils are compared with 'core French' pupils (i.e. pupils who have only a daily lesson in French) the immersion pupils are clearly superior in the receptive skills of listening/reading. Pupils who have enjoyed 'early immersion' (starting in the *kindergarten*) have near-native receptive performance by the end of the elementary school. They do not reach native-like performance in the productive skills of speaking/writing, however, though they do achieve 'functional bilingualism' by grade 8 in most programmes.
- ii. **as to performance in English:** there is some evidence that immersion pupils may lag behind initially but they quickly catch up as soon as English is introduced as a component in the curriculum at about grades 3 or 4 and some immersion pupils then go on to outperform (in English)

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pupils who have not had the immersion experience in French. (In this connection it should be remembered that many immersion pupils are self-selected members of motivated, middle-class groups whose performance in English would be higher than average and have good support at home.)

- iii. **the effect on other subjects** (maths, science, etc) has, on the whole not been adverse though 'early' rather than 'late' immersion has been found to produce better results.
- iv. **the accepted wisdom is that it is not only pupils of high ability who profit from immersion.**

On the question about the effect of family background the research evidence is less certain for the obvious reason that on the whole the immersion movement in Canada has been 'parent led'. The pupils concerned have mostly been volunteers from highly motivated homes. There is little hard evidence as to the effect of immersion in French on pupils from less than 'encouraging homes' (who may, in some areas, be the majority) and therefore nothing can be said about the suitability of immersion for **all** pupils.

Similarly, there is **some** evidence that immersion has positive effects in reducing the 'social distance' that English speakers see as separating them from French Canadians. But the results have not always been positive. Some English-speaking parents have seen immersion as a threat. They wish their children to continue to attend English medium schools and there have been violent local protests and considerable tension. Opposition has not all been from possibly prejudiced parents. The generally accepted view has also been challenged by well qualified academics. Thus Gilles Bibeau of the University of Montreal (cf. his contribution to *The Immersion Phenomenon* cited above) doubts whether bilingual education produces good effects on intellectual development (as many researchers currently assert) **for children drawn from minority or underprivileged groups:**

Most immersion experiments have been conducted with children of privileged majority groups; the children and parents have been mostly volunteers living in almost exclusively anglophone neighbourhoods. He states categorically: Contemporary research clearly indicates that cognitive development is influenced and often hindered by early bilingualism, and that a number of affective problems arise from such early bilingualism'.

Bibeau also questions the hypothesis that attitudes vis-à-vis the French language community have been improved by immersion in French. He makes an interesting observation about the falling off in language skills at the approach of adolescence:

The deterioration of language skills at the age of eight or nine is a very important phenomenon that has been given too little attention. Many children in early immersion are very successful in the first three years, but regress in the second language for reasons that seem related to their phase of social

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identification. This phase is widely recognised with respect to the mother tongue, but its effect on second-language learning ... had not been anticipated.

The 'regress' in language skills (including mother tongue skills) as children approach adolescence is something that teachers in the UK will recognise. It seems to be associated with the decline in 'empathy' at about age ten that Burstall noted in the NFER evaluation of the Primary French project (Burstall et. al. 1974).

Bideau's conclusion is one that offers some encouragement to those in this volume who advocate the less intensive and radical *section bilingue* approaches to 'immersion' learning. Teaching **one school subject** through the medium of the foreign language is called in Canada 'intensive teaching'. Bideau's opinion is that *the results of intensive teaching compare favourably with those of immersion* (Bideau 1984). He goes further and suggests that *pure immersion is passé*. What he advocates is 'intensive teaching' mainly at the secondary school level and **as near as possible to the end of a child's schooling and his eventual (adult) use of the language**, in other words the conventional pattern with the introduction of intensive methods at the more advanced stages.

Bilingual schools in Wales

In marked contrast to the wealth of research devoted to immersion and intensive methods in Canada, intensive experiments in UK schools have had very little objective study. Only in Wales has there been a serious effort to study the effects, and the effectiveness, of bilingual education.

In 1968 the (now defunct and sadly missed) Schools Council established the Bilingual Education Project (5-11) to enable initially monoglot English-speaking children in anglicised areas to achieve a high standard of proficiency in Welsh by the end of their primary education. It sought to do this, not by introducing Welsh lessons, as such, into the timetable, but by using Welsh as a medium of instruction, thus allowing the English speaking child to learn a second language and to broaden his/her educational experience at the same time.

Professor C J Dodson was appointed as evaluator of the project. The senior research officer to the project, Dr Eurwen Price, reported in 1978. His report was quite categorical about the effect of bilingual education on general intellectual development: the latter did not suffer in any way. English, maths, and nonverbal tests showed no significant differences between pupils in the bilingual programme and others, while in the highest socio-economic categories the bilingual pupils did significantly better than control pupils.

As to pupils' performance in the second language, Welsh, the report states that, as in the Canadian immersion programmes, the skill of **understanding the spoken language** was generally well established by the age of seven. Speaking skills, however, as in Canada, varied greatly, only the pupils of average or above average ability having even 'fairly well established' speaking skills.

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The most important factor proved to be the amount of time allotted to the second language. The ideal time appeared to be half the school day.

Two 'levels' of language learning

In his evaluation of the project Professor Dodson made his now well-known distinction between 'medium orientated' and 'message orientated' classroom activities (see our introduction page 3).

Many teachers initially made the error of expecting message orientated communication without the initial first-level (medium orientated) work for any play activity. Although the patterns used were on most occasions kept simple, the language was used indiscriminately as if it were the child's first language. After some time the teachers became disheartened because the children neither learned to respond in Welsh sufficiently quickly nor used Welsh as a natural vehicle of communication. (Schools Council 1987, p 48)

In Professor Dodson's opinion the evidence of the Welsh Bilingual project showed that teaching was most effective when there was a flexible working together of the two 'levels' of language activity.

In the following chapter a case study of a Welsh bilingual secondary school by its headmaster brings the story more up to date. The author, himself bilingual, having learnt his Welsh as an adult, writes from ten years' experience of building up a bilingual approach in his school.

A CASE HISTORY FROM WALES

Gerald Morgan

Penweddig Bilingual Comprehensive School, Aberystwyth

Background 1

A great deal of time and effort is invested in the teaching of Welsh to the children of Wales. 15% of pupils are assessed as fluent by their headteachers at primary level (1); 11% of secondary pupils are taught Welsh as a first language, while another 67.7% of 11-year-olds are taught Welsh as a second language. At 14-plus, however, the percentage of mother-tongue pupils remains steady, but the percentage of second-language pupils drops dramatically, to 17.7%. This flight from Welsh occurs when option-choices are made, and can be reasonably attributed to a lack of success in mastering the language by the age of fourteen. The situation is in some ways akin to the drop-out rate from French at the same age, and for some of the same reasons. If the aim of teaching Welsh as a second language to 67.7% is to achieve fluency, then the failure rate is enormous, despite the dedicated efforts of many teachers, organisers and researchers, and despite the remarkable successes achieved in individual schools.

Mother-tongue teaching of Welsh, by contrast, enjoys a more privileged status in almost all the fifty-odd secondary schools which educate the vast majority of mother-tongue pupils. In most of these schools Welsh is a core subject alongside English and mathematics, and is protected from the rigours of option-choice. It has also been assisted by the rapid growth of the use of Welsh as a medium; 41 secondary schools now offer five or more subjects through the medium of Welsh, while another twelve schools offer fewer than five.

One obvious explanation for the comparative failure of second-language teaching to achieve fluency (despite, I repeat, a number of exceptions) is lack of exposure. Four or five Welsh lessons a week in a school whose other lessons and whole ethos are overwhelmingly anglophone cannot be expected to achieve better results than French teaching in similar circumstances.

Background 2

The comparison with French is not, however, entirely fair since a good deal of teaching of Welsh is done in the primary schools. But the situation is of course a great deal more complicated.

¹ Statistics are taken from Statistics of Education in Wales 1986 (HMSO)

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Language policies vary considerably from LEA to LEA, and schools vary considerably in their commitment to these policies. For example, it may be easier for parents in anglicised Gwent to see their children attain fluency (through the Welsh Playgroup Movement and Welsh-medium primary units) than for parents in a West Wales seaside village which may be situated within the Welsh-speaking heartland but is itself largely anglicised, and where shortage of numbers makes playgroups and Welsh-medium units impossible. In most Welsh primary schools the language situation is either overwhelmingly English, or so mixed as to make consistent, progressive teaching difficult - especially as there is (particularly in the Welsh-speaking heartland) a steady influx of pupils of all ages whose parents have moved from England to Wales.

The most obvious success in Welsh-language teaching has been the growth of bilingual primary and secondary schools. In 1960 there were twenty Welsh-medium primary schools, mostly serving the anglicised SE and NE of Wales. By 1986 the number had risen to 67. The majority of pupils in these schools come from non-Welsh-speaking homes (many via the Welsh Playgroup Movement) and have achieved fluency well before age eleven. The first bilingual secondary school was established at Rhyl in 1955; there are now sixteen, with Welsh-medium sets and streams in another 37 schools. The Welsh-medium streams and sets exist largely but not entirely in the schools of Gwynedd and Dyfed. Some of the fully bilingual² secondary schools have a majority of mother-tongue Welsh-speakers; others have majorities (as high as 95%) of pupils from non-Welsh-speaking homes who have achieved fluency through the Welsh-medium primary schools.

Background 3

Other successful initiatives exist in Wales apart from the bilingual schools movement. One is the creation in Gwynedd and Dyfed of teams of *athrawon bro*, an untranslatable term describing peripatetic primary teachers allocated to groups of small primary schools with mixed language situations, whose task is to supplement the school's Welsh teaching. Another more recent initiative is the creation in the same two counties, again for primary pupils, of language centres for 'latecomers'. These are those pupils who arrive from England or elsewhere without a word of Welsh. They can spend (with parental consent) two days a week at the nearest centre, and their progress in Welsh is dramatic.

The following case-history attempts to recount the effort of a bilingual secondary school, whose first intake of pupils were all already Welsh-speaking, to offer intensive Welsh teaching and a bilingual education to pupils lacking either a Welsh-speaking home or the successful achievement of fluency at primary school, for whatever reason. It will not be easy to achieve objectivity,

² The word 'bilingual', when used to describe a school, has acquired a particular meaning in Welsh parlance. It describes a school whose staff and pupils are all committed to fluency in both Welsh and English (often by teaching some subjects in one language and others in the other), and where the administration and cultural life of the school are largely in Welsh.

since the author was the initiator of the policy and has been the school's headteacher from its opening.

Penweddig School Secondary Learners Group

Penweddig Bilingual Comprehensive School, Aberystwyth, was established in 1973 by the Cardiganshire Education Authority immediately prior to the county's absorption into Dyfed. Hitherto the town and the north of the county had been served by a grammar school and a secondary modern school. Of the annual intake of pupils, about 30% were (and are) Welsh-speaking, with the rest having varying degrees of skill in the language. Consequently pupils might be taught Welsh lessons (it was compulsory until sixteen) in a first-language group or a second/foreign-language group. Apart from these lessons, English was the dominant language in both schools, since both employed a number of non-Welsh-speaking teachers and taught largely through English.

Faced with reorganisation, the LEA discussed a number of comprehensive alternatives before deciding on two 11-18 comprehensives, one English-medium (but teaching Welsh as a subject), and one 'bilingual'. As hinted above (p 80), the title 'bilingual' is understood in Welsh parlance to mean a school teaching some subjects in Welsh, some in English, with compulsory lessons in both as subjects, with all staff and pupils expected to be bilingual, and with much of the school's cultural life being lived in Welsh.

Penweddig was the sixth such secondary school in Wales. The previous five had all been established in the anglicised NE and SE of the country, while Aberystwyth (pop. 12,000) serves a rural and traditionally Welsh-speaking area. However, as the figure of 30% Welsh-speaking pupils quoted above shows, Welsh is and has been for some time the minority language among young people, though much stronger among the older population, particularly in the country.

For many years the Cardiganshire LEA's policy had been to teach Welsh to all primary pupils, but the implementation of this policy varied from school to school, and certainly had not led to fluency among a majority of children from English-speaking homes. It was obvious, therefore, that when parents were asked to choose between the English-medium school (Penglais) and the bilingual school (Penweddig), a majority would certainly choose the English-medium school. This was to be expected not simply on grounds of mother tongue, but from suspicion of what was (for the area) an untried system. There had been a fierce local debate during the years prior to reorganisation, which left some people in positions from which retreat was not easy. Other Welsh-speaking parents shared a traditional deference to English ('world-language', 'career prospects') and a feeling that home was a sufficient bastion to protect Welsh. It seemed likely, therefore, that when parental choice was made for September 1973, fewer than 30% of primary leavers would be directed by their parents to Penweddig. This proved so; the school's first year consisted of 67 children. As many as thirty Welsh-speakers went, with more than 200 others, to the English-medium school.

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At this point it becomes necessary to speak personally. As the new headmaster of Penweddig, I was aware of the criticism that the new school might become a comfy and introverted Welsh-speaking enclave. However, it seemed healthier to see the school in a missionary situation. The school's catchment area is a bridge between Welsh-speaking North Wales and Welsh-speaking South Wales; it seemed essential that the school should contribute to the extension of Welsh in the area, for the benefit both of the pupils and their community. During the first year, parents of the next cohort began to enquire whether the school might accept 'learners', pupils not fluent in Welsh, but wishing to be so. My own sympathies were engaged, since I learned Welsh as an adult and knew how frustrating it is to be eleven years old, to want to learn Welsh properly, and to be without the opportunity to do so.

After discussions with staff, governors and officials I visited two well-established bilingual schools in the county of Clwyd, at Mold and St Asaph (to which the pioneer Rhyl school had moved). Both schools had, in addition to pupils from designated bilingual primary schools, opened their doors to 'learners', pupils who for a variety of reasons had not learned Welsh fluently at home or at primary school, but whose parents wanted them to have a bilingual education. I was able to talk with both staff and pupils, and the experience was invaluable in developing our own approach.

The plan

As a result of these visits and discussions, Penweddig formulated a policy which was explained (inadequately) to prospective parents. When the figures for the 1974 intake reached us, the 95-strong group included some fifteen whom we categorised (after consultation with primary heads, parents and the pupils themselves) as 'learners'. The policy worked as follows.

It so happened that because of shortage of space and staff the 95 had to be divided into three large mixed-ability classes. The learners' group was included in one of these, along with some seventeen first-language speakers. I was glad when in subsequent years we were able to divide the intake into four classes and divide the learners' group between two classes, making integration on a social and linguistic level easier. The learners are taught in their mixed-language classes for English, science, mathematics and music, while for craft the whole year is regrouped for a modular 'circus' and for physical education there are traditional gender-groups.

For Welsh, history, geography, religious education and French the learners are in their own set. French is taught by a French teacher, the other subjects usually by a Welsh teacher (in fact, for some years Welsh, history and geography have been taught as a single subject for all first-year pupils).

The net result of this policy, in terms of language-time, is as follows:

English	5 lessons	English-medium
Science/Maths	10 lessons	Book work in English, some oral use of Welsh

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Craft/PE/Music	10 lessons	In Welsh, mostly oral, with English explanations when necessary
Welsh Combined Studies, RE and French	15 lessons	Welsh-medium

It can be seen, therefore, that the learners experience an average of three 35-minute Welsh-medium lessons per day.

Teaching

The school has been fortunate in that from 1975 the Head of Welsh Department has been Alun Jones, who had already gained considerable success as a teacher of Welsh as a second language, and who took over the running and planning of the learners' course with an enthusiasm shared by his assistant and course director Vivian Davies and other members of the Welsh department and the school's staff.

Great emphasis is laid on the development of language-patterns and language skills, with most of the initial work being oral. These patterns and skills have been carefully graded and are introduced in appropriate second language situations. It can be easily shown that where there is no proper emphasis on patterns and their structuring, success and fluency are much more difficult to achieve. Although three lessons a day (and other features of the course described below) give room for 'immersion' teaching, the principle of Carl Dodgson's Bilingual Method (use of the first language to develop the second) is never forgotten. It is perhaps true to say that there is now less emphasis on drills and more on group work, sometimes with the enthusiastic participation of Sixth formers.

The special provision of sets which we make for the Form One and Two learners, although expensive in staffing, is more than justified in practice. Since the Welsh-medium subjects other than music are 'setted' for learners, those who achieve fluency quickly need not wait until the end of the first year, or the end of the course after year two, before transferring to a first-language set. Every learner can be treated as an individual and taught according to speed of progress. Thanks to the team-work of the teachers involved, pupils can make partial transfer to the first-language set, and even make 'return visits' when some linguistic difficulty arises.

It is true to say that for the first weeks of the course there is little teaching of history and geography. These are in fact integrated with Welsh throughout the first year in what may be called a 'Welsh and Welsh Studies' course, taught by the Welsh department. This is so that a major review of basic language skills can be made and sound foundations laid. But the course quickly develops using materials from the Welsh Studies course, on the fundamental principle that it is better to use a second language as a medium in order to give it validity and achieve fluency quicker.

Intensive sessions

The learners' course contains elements other than formal lessons. In the last full week of August each year the Welsh department, with the assistance of most of the rest of the school's teaching staff, runs a five-day residential course in the school buildings. We took the idea from Rhydfelen Bilingual Comprehensive School, Pontypridd, but whereas Rhydfelen uses its course as a general introduction to the school, Penweddig chose to concentrate on its learners. However, we also invite all pupils coming singly or in small groups from primary schools; the course inducts them into the ways of a (for them) very large establishment, and they give a strong Welsh-speaking atmosphere to the course for the benefit of the learners, who are also helped by Sixth formers who spend the course in residence.

The summer course is initiated by a meeting with parents in June/July which is invaluable in giving parents information, reassurance and some acquaintance with teachers. The school regards such reassurance as being even more important for the parents of English-speaking learners than others, since they are taking a greater leap of faith in choosing a bilingual education for their children. The course itself serves a number of valuable purposes vis-à-vis the learners. They have to be prepared for what could be a considerable culture shock - the change of language in their environment as well as in their formal lessons. The course anticipates and cushions the shock, as well as giving familiarity with the physical environment and many of the teachers and senior pupils. It enables the Welsh department to make an initial assessment of the individual linguistic (and other) abilities of the learners.

A second intensive experience is prepared every year for both first and second-year learners either before or after Christmas - a five-day residential course at Llangrannog, the Welsh league of Youth's all-weather camp. Here some 25-30 pupils live, work and play in Welsh from morning till night, accompanied, taught and supervised by two of the school's Welsh department plus three or four student-teachers from the Education Department of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth - students doing their term's teaching practice at Penweddig. They invariably comment on their sense of exhaustion and enrichment by the experience. The course gives an enormous boost to pupils' motivation and confidence; we have come to expect that the one or two pupils who fail to attend either the summer or the winter course will be unlikely to achieve fluency in Welsh.

Further support is given to the learners in lunch-time discussion groups held by the Welsh department, and by the inclusion of a special competition for them in the school's annual Eisteddfod - a highly prestigious and colourful event in which they are thus assured of status. Both these initiatives have been very successful. Less successful, though still near to my heart, was an attempt to ensure 'adoption' of a learner by a Welsh-speaking family which had a child of similar age. This probably needed much more careful preparation than it was given.

Problems

I would identify our problems as follows. One is that implied in the phrase 'language across the curriculum'. Teachers not directly involved with the learners' group as a group do not always realise that there may be Welsh learners in a group before them. Their own Welsh may be too idiomatic and too dialectally diverse for a learner to follow with confidence. The structure of the Welsh verb involves both periphrastic and inflected forms; the language taught to learners relies heavily (as does ordinary Welsh conversation) on periphrastic forms, but standard written Welsh makes use of inflected forms. During the first year in particular these problems do not generally arise, since the learners receive so much attention, but they are apparent during the third year, when we expect the learners to follow all courses alongside the first-language speakers. This is the stage at which an occasional pupil (about one per annum on average) usually decides to move to the English-medium school, sometimes on a trial basis to make sure that this is the best move.

Another problem may be described as that of social integration. The only study made specifically of the Penweddig learners is that of Ms L. P. Thomas for the degree of M Ed, entitled: *A study of the development of a bilingual secondary school with special reference to a group of Welsh learners* (University College of Wales, 1982). This report analysed friendship patterns and showed that friendship bonds between learners (sometimes deriving from their shared primary school) tended to continue through the third year, with integration into Welsh-medium academic groups having little effect on friendship patterns. However, the pupils studied seemed well content with their situation and were happy at the school and proud of their achievement in learning Welsh.

What motivates learners?

The learners' situation in Penweddig is a demanding one. They come to us with anything from six years' primary Welsh to none at all; they come with all kinds of general background and all levels of academic ability. In one way their situation resembles that of a British child with several years' primary French lessons whose parents move to France and send him to a French school - the cultural change is enormous. The resemblance is only superficial, however, since in the Welsh situation the Welsh-speakers are all more or less fluent in English, so the learners are not forced to speak Welsh for lack of a common language (nor, on the other hand, are they forced to choose Penweddig in the first place!).

That last observation naturally leads one to consider, very briefly, why the learners do come to Penweddig at all - as opposed to the reasons why we chose to make it possible. Ms L. P. Thomas interviewed the parents of the learners' group she studied and found them particularly anxious that their children should attend a small school rather than a large one, and attracted by the school's reputation. They did not place great stress on the value of Welsh as a vocational qualification, which seems surprising, since fluency in Welsh is a valuable

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additional qualification for nursing and reception, for teaching and the media, for local government, business and clerical employment.

That the Welsh learners benefit Penweddig is indisputable, though there are certainly unexpressed feelings in one or two quarters that there might be less English used in the playground if the school did not receive learners. They bring cultural and social variety to the school. They have included children with American, French, German and Italian parents as well as English, Irish and Scots. Academic high-fliers among them have achieved distinction at university; those with difficult personal problems have often been nursed through school successfully. This year's (1987) intake of 105 includes 30 learners, and if Penweddig is to continue to flourish as a bilingual secondary school it must be ready and able to cope with as high (or still higher) a proportion of learners. Since nearly all those studied by Ms Thomas said that they would be keen to send their own children to a bilingual school when the time came, there is room for optimism.

PART THREE: INTENSIVE COURSES AT LOCAL CENTRES

However challenging and imaginative may be the *sections bilingues* and the intensive courses abroad described in earlier pages, there is no doubt that the kind of intensive teaching that has made most progress in the past decade has been courses put on in local centres involving cooperation between schoolteachers and tutors in higher or further education or LEA language advisers.

Our 1978 edition offered a number of examples of this kind of cooperation. On the LEA side, Vi Howe described pioneering residential week-ends for primary school French learners in Hertfordshire. Barrie King reported on three-day courses for able Fifth formers in French and German at the Somerset LEA residential youth centre at Kilve Court. From West Sussex D P G Maddock described a two-day oral French course at the county residential centre at Lodge Hill, and Duncan Sidwell told of the one-day intensive courses offered to Sixth formers in Leicestershire at the excellently equipped county resources centre.

Sometimes the initiative for such intensive sessions has come from schools, but the availability of a local centre has generally proved the key to success. That was the case described in our earlier edition by Richard Townsend who organised residential weeks in French for pupils of Pimlico School, a mixed comprehensive school in inner London.

Several of the initiatives described in our earlier edition came from tutors in university language teaching centres. Examples of such courses were the one week remedial course for slower learners facing the 16+ examination described by Bryan Howson, the intensive Russian for Sixth formers run by David Rix and the 'reciprocal' French/English course for seventeen-year olds organised by Mary Dalwood (all of these at the Language Teaching Centre, York University).

In this section the accounts from Hertfordshire, Leicestershire and York are brought up to date. The other contributions tell of new developments. Though they cover a variety of objectives and situations they nearly all share two characteristics:

- i. their success depends largely on the availability of a specialised centre where resources and staff can be concentrated at a level that no single school on its own could match. It is this that makes it possible to create a 'cultural island' within which the young learner can 'suspend disbelief'. (There are, however, exceptions. Some schools, by exceptional effort, have managed to 'go it alone' without using a local centre, as the account from Peers School illustrates);

Intensive courses at local centres

- ii. the second essential, when a local centre is available, is willingness of schools and tutors in higher education establishments and/or LEA advisers to collaborate closely so that intensive sessions can be dovetailed into school timetables.

The attractiveness of intensive sessions at local centres is that they can be offered to **all** pupils regardless of parental background, in a way that study courses abroad cannot. It is likely that the 1990s will see growing interest in this way of providing 'level two' language activity for a far greater number of pupils than at present.

The implication is that we shall need a network of suitably equipped and staffed local centres in every region, to which schools have access on flexible terms and where banks of excellent materials can be built up and intensively exploited.

It is to this possibility that Dick Capel-Davies returns in the *Epilogue* to this symposium (p 143). As he suggests, if the proposed local centres for schools' intensive sessions also serve other purposes, such as bespoke courses for local commerce and industry, or adult evening classes, this could greatly economise costs.

INTENSIVE FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSES IN HERTFORDSHIRE

Vi Howe
County Adviser for Modern Languages

Introduction

Intensive courses in Hertfordshire have been a feature of the modern languages scene in the county for the past twenty years. As far back as 1968 a three-day residential model was devised in order to provide children in primary schools with experience of using French as a means of communication without having to cross the Channel. Since then the model has been adapted to meet the needs of different age groups and has been shortened or lengthened according to the circumstances. It has also been adopted for use in other languages, German, Spanish and occasionally a little Italian.

The model has stood the test of time and in the academic year of 1987/88 some forty-eight intensive courses have been programmed by the advisory service mostly for Fourth and Fifth formers. Furthermore, there are a number of school-arranged courses taking place as well.

The intention of all the courses is to give pupils the opportunity of hearing and speaking a language continuously for an extended period of time and to enable them to prove to themselves that not only can they communicate but also enjoy the experience. The intensive course seeks to exploit what pupils have learned in class and is an extension of the work of the teacher. The aim is above all to build up the self-confidence of the pupils and to boost their motivation for language learning through a realisation of personal achievement and enjoyment.

Duration

The length of the courses varies. At present, most take place on a single day or half a day during the week or sometimes on a Saturday. A three hour period is the minimum worthwhile time span. Obviously in a longer session a greater variety of activities can be introduced, and a two to four day or a weekend residential course has been found to give the most positive results.

Participants

The pupils attending most Hertfordshire courses are drawn from a number of schools in the same area, usually about ten or twelve. The optimum number

for a group is between 36 and 48 pupils so that they can be divided into either six groups of six, or six groups of eight. The pupils are volunteers and courses are always over-subscribed.

Although some courses are for specific groups of pupils, for example 'A' level candidates, for other courses, such as those for middle school groups, there is no attempt to select pupils according to their ability.

It has been found that pupils who are low achievers for whatever reasons, with a limited knowledge of the language, have adapted well to the intensive course situation. The varied nature of the activities and the mode of working in pairs or small groups with an adult leader soon builds up the confidence of weaker pupils.

Staff

As a general rule one member of staff is required for six or eight pupils with, if possible, an overall organiser who is responsible for the pace of the course. Staff members can be teachers, although if the courses are held on a school day this is not often possible. They can also be student teachers in training, foreign language assistants or other native speakers (for example a parent). Visitors from abroad have also been recruited on occasions.

If the courses are for primary or middle school pupils, Sixth formers can be invited to take part as staff members. When this happens the Sixth formers, as well as the pupils attending the course, also usually derive great benefit from the experience.

It is an advantage when the participants do not know the staff or many of the other pupils. This ensures that they are coming into a new situation and can make a fresh start as a member of a new community.

Venue

The type of accommodation selected for the course is important. As far as possible, courses should not take place in the school classroom known to the pupils so that they can enter a different environment, as the *dépaysement* is a valuable element.

A Sixth form block or youth wing can be suitable. Hertfordshire courses have been organised in a variety of places, but day courses for older pupils usually take place in a teachers' centre.

A minimum of three rooms are required, one must be large enough to accommodate the whole group with enough chairs but not desks. A few tables can be useful but there must be space for the pupils to move about the rooms easily. Wall space is essential so that posters, notices and other information relating to the course can be displayed.

Language

The most vital element of the intensive course concerns the use of the foreign language throughout. Once there is a relaxation of this, for any reason,

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it is difficult to ensure the pupils' total commitment to the intensive nature of the course. Strangely, pupils are often more ready to co-operate in using the foreign language at all times than the staff who sometimes need to be convinced it is essential to persevere. The success and validity of the intensive course depends on the use of the foreign language, and English must be banned.

Initial contact

Pupils are always greeted individually as they arrive. They are asked their name and are given a coloured badge bearing their Christian name. The colour denotes the group they will join, pupils from the same school are put into different groups. At this time they are asked friendly questions of a general nature, their method of travel to the centre, the name of their teacher, and they are also shown the toilets. This initial contact is very important as it sets the scene and establishes the use of the foreign language as a means of communication.

During the course pupils have little time to themselves and are discouraged from reverting to English with their friends. The staff make a point of spending every possible moment chatting informally with pupils. They also handle the sale of drinks, biscuits, crisps during breaks. Everything takes place in the foreign language, even washing up the cups. This practical element of the course ensures that speaking a foreign language is not divorced from real life.

Courses in French for younger pupils often have a fun start with the presentation of a passport which the pupils have prepared in advance. Pupils are asked personal questions: name, place, date of birth, profession, before passing on to the customs where they present a bag containing a variety of items. Anything can be placed in the bag by the pupils provided they know the name of it in French. After answering the customs officer's questions they go to the bank to change a limited sum of money, usually 20p to 50p into Francs for the purchase of sweets later in the course. Sometimes a French meal or snack is arranged as part of the course activities. This depends on the accommodation and facilities.

Themes

Each course is planned round a central theme. As far as possible all the activities relate to this. Some of the themes chosen for younger pupils are: the town, food, school, the department store, Paris; for Sixth formers themes such as: young people, pollution and the environment, the media, publicity, urban and rural development, a region, a town, or events during a given year.

The themes may or may not relate to the 'A' level syllabus being studied by the pupils. The intention is to provide a topic which will stimulate an exchange and enable the pupils to express views from the information provided during the course and not necessarily from a prior study.

Organisation of a single day course

After the initial contact pupils are usually given a quiz activity which they can do in pairs until the whole group has assembled. This often relates to the information displayed on the walls.

The course starts formally with the staff saying a few sentences about themselves in the foreign language, the course organiser announcing the programme and explaining the group system, already decided by the coloured badges.

This is followed by an input session to the whole group on the chosen theme using video, slides, OHP or a combination of all three. Structures and vocabulary which are vital are highlighted. The input session is usually conducted by the course organiser and lasts for twenty minutes.

Most of the work relating to the theme takes place in small groups of six or eight pupils with a member of staff. These groups rotate to provide variety and change of staff for the pupils. The activities can involve listening, speaking, reading, and each one usually lasts for twenty minutes. This has been found to be the optimum length of time to obtain the maximum from a group. It is helpful if the groups can move from room to room as this stimulates the pupils and revives flagging attention. The pupils in their groups rotate three or four times but the staff member presents the same activity to the different groups. With six groups, three different activities would be required so that there are two rotations, two groups being engaged on the same activity at the same time with different members of staff. The rotating groups are the very core of the intensive course and considerable ground can be covered in this way. Each adult has one specific task or teaching point to accomplish with a small group of pupils in a limited space of time and no time is wasted. Younger pupils who are not able to sustain a lengthy exchange in a foreign language need opportunities to touch objects, to respond bodily to a linguistic stimulus and to move from place to place. Their rotating groups need to include craft activities, acting, games, shopping and story telling. The tasks or activities of the rotating groups relate to the theme of the course.

The latter part of the course gives the pupils the opportunity to show what information they have assimilated about the theme and how they can reproduce it in their own words.

Younger pupils might present a story from pictures they have drawn, act out a situation, tell a story with figurines or shadow puppets.

In the case of Sixth formers, staff members sometimes make themselves available to the pupils who in two's or three's spend up to five minutes discussing aspects of the theme considered earlier in the day. These smaller groups are constituted freely by the pupils and they will see each staff member in turn. This activity is usually followed by some pair work. Pupils will prepare a situation which they will later present. This could be:

- a complaint about a product (publicity)
- a job interview (young people)
- the preparation of a commentary on a few slides (region or town)

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The presentation is made orally to half the course so that there are only nine or twelve pairs. On this occasion pupils are not expected to read a prepared text but to talk from either brief notes or preferably without any written support. Courses always finish with all pupils coming together for a brief joint activity at the close of the day.

Reaction of pupils

It is pleasing to see pupils who are nervous at the start of the course taking part in the final activities with confidence. They have been helped along to this stage by the different groupings during the day: as individuals, in a large group, in their colour groups where work often takes place in pairs, and finally working in two's, three's or four's of their own choosing. They show they are at ease working within the theme which has been tackled in a variety of ways during the course.

The reaction of the pupils of all ages at the end of the course is always one of achievement. They have survived a whole day, or longer as the case may be, of hearing and speaking a foreign language. They are often surprised to find that they have enjoyed it. Teachers speak of the enthusiasm of pupils on their return to school and the spin off in language lessons for other pupils.

Conclusion

The atmosphere of the course is important. It must be purposeful but relaxed and the staff need to be friendly and helpful. The pupils come voluntarily. They are anxious to benefit and are always willing to co-operate. The secret of a successful course lies in the planning. Every moment of the day must be foreseen, the time-table decided and adhered to. It is possible to integrate staff members with limited teaching experience into a course, provided the overall programme is well organised.

However, it has been found that the participation of a minimum of two members of staff who are familiar with the intensive course pattern ensures the smooth running of the day.

In Hertfordshire we have found intensive courses to be extremely worthwhile, providing for the pupils both motivation and a sense of personal achievement in their language learning.

These courses are invaluable as a preparation for a visit to a foreign country, and for many pupils for whom a visit is not possible they are an essential ingredient to their study of a foreign language.

Why not have a go ... it is exhausting, but very satisfying.

'IMMERSION' IN THE EUROPE RESOURCES CENTRE IN LEICESTERSHIRE

Bernard Kavanagh
County Adviser for Modern Languages

The Europe Resources Centre (ERC), now some four years old, houses major collections of resources: books, maps, slides, sound recordings, brochures, artefacts, etc. France, Germany, Italy and Spain are the main countries covered. Materials can be borrowed by teachers, and not just language teachers. We run our modern languages in-service courses there and mount exhibitions, for example, of publishers' material or resources devised by local teachers for the East Midlands Graded Assessment Scheme, or again, of art-work done by Leicestershire teachers of design or by colleagues in our Link Areas: the Seine-Maritime, the Saarland, and the City of Florence.

The ERC shares premises with the older Leicestershire Resources Centre, which has built up over the years an eclectic resource collection, with material on China, Chaucer and the Tudors, for instance. The LRC is run by a teacher leader, George Orton, who takes the main responsibility for the half-day sessions described below. Much of what we have evolved since the ERC opened has been possible only because of the excellent relationships between the Centre, the Modern Languages Advisers and the Advisory Teacher for Modern Languages.

Unlike other teachers' centres in the county, the ERC receives large numbers of children every term. They come for intensive language days or for half-days, the aim of which is to give a 'flavour' of a country or a region. This school year, thirty intensive language days (French and German) have been held, and 23 half-days on Normandy, Germany and Florence. This represents some 1630 children. Language days cater for pupils aged fourteen to eighteen, the half-days for primary and lower secondary schools, generally.

Sixth form groups are recruited from the county as a whole, while all other groups come from one school at a time. We cannot meet demand, but think that the present provision represents saturation point, at present staff levels.

The format for intensive language days for years 3, 4 and 5 is as follows (the examples I give are French, but the German ones are similar):

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a. m. (3 hours, with a break)
Revision/learning of transactional language to do with, for example, finding one's way, buying things, etc. Each topic, or situation, is revised with the groups as a whole, then practised in smaller groups, with cue-cards.
p. m. (1 ½ to 2 hours)
A simulation, in which the language learnt or revised in the morning is put to use. Children generally work in pairs, asking for services, booking things, buying souvenirs and so on. This will involve at least one telephone conversation per pair. There are 'jokers', which require children to report loss of belongings, or deal with health problems, or report the disappearance of their partner to the police...

Years 4 and 5 do *Le Congé de Pentecôte*, which involves some of the same things, plus booking accommodation and seeking information at the *Syndicat d'Initiative*...

In both cases, there are also 'quiet' activities, quizzes, puzzles, to help vary things, to avoid queues and to take a bit of pressure off...

Year 6 do varied activities, culminating in an activity requiring them to interview others; year 7 have a varied diet, plus an enquiry into the disappearance of a missing person.

Anticipating possible questions

STAFFING

Colleagues in schools arrange the day out of school by negotiation with the Head. Each group (years 3, 4, 5) must be accompanied by a language teacher (this is a way of doing a little painless INSET). We draw lots among those schools which apply, but keep records and make sure that schools do not get more than their share. There have been some problems with supply cover, but not many.

COST TO PUPILS

Children pay about £1.20 for the whole day; this includes chocolate and a croissant, and a 'French' or 'German' lunch. Some schools have subsidised children from school funds, but most have their pupils pay the full cost. Travel arrangements are left to the schools.

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EFFECTIVENESS

Gains and losses are difficult to gauge. Certainly, there is a big boost to motivation. Children come into contact with native speakers and with adults other than their teachers who speak the target language. Some of them discover, for the first time, that language can actually accomplish things, and that it is after all possible to understand the target language spoken by sympathetic 'natives'.

The format we have evolved concentrates on a number of related topics/situations, which generally coincide with what pupils have been doing in school. We need always to try to strike a balance between 'We've done all this!' and 'I don't know what they are on about!' The advisory teacher contacts schools before they come and shows teachers the material, so that a balance can at least be sought. Certainly, customer satisfaction is high - they all want to come back!

Beyond the obvious points about a generous staff-student ratio (we like to have about seven for a group of thirty), I should say that the kind of session I have outlined seems to work well because of its coherence.

The materials have been evolved by advisers in modern languages (Duncan Sidwell and myself, and Kit Thorne during Duncan's secondment this year), the advisory teacher, at present Bridget Clements, a Head of Department on a three-year secondment, and school teacher Fellows of the School of Education of the University, of which we have two a year (so far!). The latter also help run the days; I have mentioned staff accompanying the groups; there are also foreign language assistants, who are used, by arrangement with schools, in turn. At a time when we still have too few assistants, this is a good way of making their services available to larger numbers of children.

AN INTENSIVE FRENCH COURSE FOR UNDERACHIEVERS

Bryan Howson

Lecturer, Language Teaching Centre, York University

The aims of this course, which has been held in January each year for the last sixteen years, are two-fold.

Aware of the problem of underachievement by relatively able Fifth formers in French, staff at the Language Teaching Centre at York arranged the course to offer some support to colleagues in local schools who are teaching such pupils.

The intention is quite unashamedly to try and improve their chances of obtaining a pass grade in the summer examination by discovering during five days of diagnostic work the gaps which exist in the pupils' knowledge of French, and filling the gaps by intensive teaching. The subsidiary motive from the Centre's point of view is to offer to the sixteen or so postgraduate students, who are following the one-year PGCE course (French), experience of intensive teaching and close contact with small groups of pupils, which is invaluable in building up their awareness of the learning problems of pupils studying French.

Tutors

These PGCE students are the teachers of the course, closely supervised by the course director, who is a full-time tutor in the Centre.

All of the graduate students have French as the main subject of their degree; they have a high level of commitment to language teaching and are roughly halfway through their year of professional training. Although they have not at the time of the course undertaken any period of formal teaching practice in schools, the first term of their course is organised so that each student does have an opportunity each week to observe a number of practising teachers in the classroom and occasionally to contribute to the teaching by taking over a section of the class. It must be said that the one feature of the course which initially caused some anxiety among practising teachers was this use of student-teachers as tutors. It is true that the graduates so employed have very little experience of working with pupils of this age and they are still in the process of learning their craft. This lack of experience is balanced, however, by the fact that they are all highly competent speakers of French and all approach this work with great enthusiasm and sympathy for learner. They are working with small groups of pupils which reduces the problem of class management they will later face with classes of 25 or more. Nearly all have spent a year in

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France working as assistants in secondary schools and all have had several hours of experience of small groups in York secondary schools during their first term at the Language Teaching Centre. Before the course they have a number of detailed briefing sessions with the course director who will later supervise the work of each group and be constantly available for advice and help.

It must be noted that these student-teachers receive no payment for the hard work they do. The cost of their week's additional residence in York is reimbursed, as are their travel expenses to the Centre from their homes.

(No charge is made to schools for the course, although pupils who attend are asked to pay £5 towards the cost of postage and materials.)

Pupil selection

The pupils are drawn from the dozen or so secondary schools in and around York, each school sending seven or eight Fifth formers. The selection of pupils to attend is undertaken mainly by the Centre. The kind of pupil the course is intended to help is not one who is already doing well in French and who is thought to be able to pass the summer examination without too much difficulty. Nor are we looking for the pupil whose performance in the subject has been consistently bad in spite of continuous and adequate teaching.

The pupils we ask for are the borderline candidates whom the teachers consider to be in danger of failing, not through laziness or lack of native ability but for reasons outside their control. They may have had periods of absence from school and have missed part of their course; some may have transferred from one school to another and lost momentum in the subject; some may have had a variety of teachers and teaching materials and become confused; others may have had no teacher at all for certain periods because of staff shortages. They are in short those who, given their level of intelligence and general ability, ought to be doing better than they are at this crucial period in their five-year course.

The dates of the course, which lasts for five full days, are always arranged so that the pupils give up two or three days of their Christmas holiday - a token of their serious intent. The course is very demanding and the pupils must start out with the understanding that they will work hard to gain the maximum advantage from their time in the Centre. Since they are all volunteers - no-one is compelled by their school to attend - pupils do work extremely hard. During this week they spend 25 hours or more on their French, the equivalent in school time of almost a term of French for many of them.

Before the course begins, class teachers of the pupils selected are asked to provide certain information to help in the allocation of pupils to their groups. An essential factor here is the particular syllabus which they are following at school and the nature of the examination for which they are preparing. The teacher is asked to comment briefly on the pupil's background in French, where weakness appears to lie and on attitudes to the subject. Each pupil is also asked to describe as well as he can where he thinks he is weak and what aspects of the subject need revision. Most find this difficult to do. Their perceptions about their

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own shortcomings are frequently vague and they often settle for a very short description of their problem - 'can't speak French' or 'don't understand the grammar'. More detailed information about the pupils' knowledge of French is provided by their performance on the short diagnostic test which is given on the first morning of the course.

Programme

Once a profile of each pupil has been established using all these sources of information, eight groups of approximately ten pupils are formed, each with two student-teachers. Each group works together for several hours on that first day. Once the teachers have met their group and formed a first-hand impression of their ability and problems, a further breakdown into groups takes place, so that for the rest of the course each teacher works with the same group of six, five or four pupils. No group exceeds six. The aim is to arrive as far as possible at working groups which are relatively homogeneous.

During the morning session, from 9.30 to 12.30, the pupils work with their teacher with only a short break of fifteen minutes for a mid-morning drink.

Being in such small groups allows pupils very little opportunity to opt out and demands a great deal of concentration.

The afternoon session from 13.30 to 15.30 is arranged somewhat differently. Under the supervision of five tutors who are available for explanation and help where it is needed, pupils work on assignments prepared and set for them by their group teacher. During this session they are consolidating in written work the activities of the morning. This work is collected and marked by the responsible group tutor and is ready for discussion and follow-up teaching on the following day. During the afternoon pupils may also spend some time in the language laboratory working on pre-recorded material.

Although the laboratory is also available for each group for an hour in the morning, group leaders are not obliged to use it with their pupils. The near individual tuition which the latter are getting during the session is a much better use of the time.

Materials

Since the course has a clearly defined target - the GCSE examination - the type of materials used by the groups is equally well defined. For each day of the course the pupils receive a package which consists of a number of typical language tasks from the examining board whose examination they will take later in the year. The exercises cover the essential areas of comprehension (aural and written), writing and oral work on topics and role-play. Each daily package also revises certain key areas of grammar - tenses, for example, or pronouns - with more exercises to practise these. The material prerecorded each day in the language laboratory also supports this revision and examination practice.

Everyone is encouraged to use French as much as possible, although there is no hesitation about using English to explain a point of meaning or grammar

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quickly and efficiently. For some pupils much of this may be only valuable revision, but it is clear that many others have never really understood the form and use of some essential structures. The pupils are constantly urged to ask questions, however basic, when they are in doubt and to stop the teacher immediately when they cannot understand.

In the informal, relaxed atmosphere of the small group with the good relationship which develops between the pupils and the student-tutor, there is the opportunity for a frank admission of ignorance and pupils feel able to ask questions which too often go unasked in the classroom before a critical audience of 30 or more.

Evaluation

It is not easy to assess the precise effect of this course on the subsequent performance of the Fifth formers who attend. They still have another term and a half to go before the examination. (The reason for holding the course so early in the Easter term is that in many schools the 'mock' examination takes place early in the year and entry to the summer examination is sometimes dependent on a pupil's satisfactory performance in the school test.)

It would therefore be unreasonable and certainly tactless of those involved in this teaching to claim credit for the success of any pupil in the actual examination. However, feedback from pupils during the course and later, as well as from teachers in local schools, indicates clearly a great deal of satisfaction with the work that the student-tutors do with these pupils. Often it is reported that pupils approach the subject with a renewed confidence in their ability to learn and are thus much better able to take advantage of the teaching in the school during the subsequent three or four months. The gain from the student-tutors' point of view is undeniable. They, too, gain confidence from close contact with fifth-year pupils as well as valuable experience of the kinds of problems which they must anticipate as serving teachers. One other measure of the success of the course is that each year has seen an increase in the number of schools and pupils who wish to participate. To raise the number of Fifth formers who attend, however, would adversely affect the close relationship which the tutor has with his or her small group of pupils and upon which the success of this course undoubtedly depends.

INTENSIVE COURSES AT BURWELL HOUSE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Hugh Myles (and members of the Modern Languages staff, St Ivo School, Cambridgeshire)

St Ivo School, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, is an eleven to eighteen mixed comprehensive school serving a large semi-rural catchment area. There are approximately 1650 pupils on roll. Pupils learn French from year 1 and German from year 2. There are nine full-time language teachers and a native assistant from France and one from Germany each year. The language staff recently played a major part in establishing a Cambridgeshire level 3 GCSE as a logical sequel to levels 2 and 3 of the local GOML scheme.

One of the most intractable problems facing modern languages teachers is to find a solution to the perennial problem of 'gardening in a gale'. My colleagues and I spend much time and effort transforming our classrooms into miniature versions of La Rochelle or Saarbrücken; posters, wall charts, 'washing lines' photos of exchange visits and many other visual delights provide a wonderfully 'authentic' environment for language acquisition. Vast amounts of energy and ingenuity are required to ensure that daily proceedings are conducted as much as possible in the target language. It is quite a feeling of achievement, then, for teachers and pupils alike when such a lesson 'goes well'. But then what? Even before the bell stops ringing and our charges leave for their next lesson, snippets of conversation can be overheard - discos, parties, the latest love affairs, maths, history. One thing remains constant, whatever the topic: the language spoken is English, as it will continue to be for the ensuing twenty-four hours until their next ML lesson. The carefully sown seeds are swept away and we patiently resume the next day planting new ones.

What can be done, then, to provide our pupils with a more effective learning situation? The ideal solution, of course, is a long stay abroad. Similar benefits can be obtained from exchange visits, of course, although because of the proximity to each other of large numbers of English pupils and the consequent tendency to undertake many group activities, the 'immersion' effect of such visits is somewhat dissipated compared to the exchange organised on an individual basis.

By definition, however, 'ideal' solutions are not always available and the question remains: how to enable greater numbers of pupils to take part in more effective language learning activities than are currently on offer in the normal school programme. One means of achieving this objective, which has been an

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established part of the ML curriculum here for many years and has proved both popular and successful, is the intensive residential course at a Local Authority centre.

Burwell House

Every year towards the end of the Christmas term Fifth year pupils studying French and German are given the opportunity to attend three-day courses, one in each language, at Burwell House, a former country residence now run by Cambridgeshire County Council as an education centre for students of all ages. The centre is impressively equipped with television, video, a reprographics room and its own TV studio, and enjoys many enviable advantages such as an idyllic setting in a quiet village in rural Cambridgeshire, a congenial atmosphere for hard but rewarding work and most important of all a warden whose industry and infectious enthusiasm are almost limitless. I would like to single out two main reasons for selecting Fifth years for this opportunity; first, only after four or five years' study are they sufficiently competent and mature to benefit from an intensive three-day immersion in quite advanced and demanding language activities (details later) and secondly, Fifth year pupils are often in need of a boost just before their mock examinations and in our experience these courses do indeed provide a psychological lift at a crucial time.

Organisation

For these courses we are limited in number to thirty pupils and it is certainly uneconomic to run them with fewer than twenty, but such is their popularity that we have never had any problems in ensuring that both courses are fully subscribed. The cost is not prohibitive. Last year, for example, we were charged £18.90 per pupil, to which we added a further £1.10 for transport, so that a final figure of £20 covered full board and lodging, materials and transport to and from the centre. It is a tradition in the school that such activities are self-financing which, in a reasonably prosperous area like ours, has rarely presented problems. However, so convinced are we of the value of these courses that no pupil who wishes to take part is ever prevented from doing so by financial hardship and on the few occasions when such difficulties do arise the cost is met out of a special discretionary fund.

Pupils are accompanied by two members of staff and as many foreign language assistants as possible. The latter are usually provided through the good offices of our county ML Adviser who will approach Heads of Department at neighbouring schools and ask them to release their assistants from their normal duties for the three days concerned. Of course, this sometimes requires that we reciprocate the favour at some later date but it is well worth doing.

Activities

Upon arrival at Burwell House, after the initial briefing from the warden concerning fire precautions and other regulations, the pupils are required to communicate solely in the foreign language. They are encouraged in this as

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much as possible by the presence of posters and other authentic materials; in addition, the food is 'very French' or 'very German'. We try to ensure that a member of staff sits at each table during meals in order to prevent pupils from slipping back into their native tongue.

The pupils spend their time working individually, in pairs, teams or in one large group. Sometimes they are all involved in the same activity and sometimes they have a choice between various different things. We normally begin the course with a game which is intended to fire their enthusiasm and release some of their boundless energy. This is a game of the treasure hunt variety, which involves reading clues in the target language, seeking the solutions (which can be inside or outside the house depending on the weather) and reporting back the answers in the target language. Pupils work together in pairs. This is one of a number of competitive activities which we run during the three days and is a great favourite.

The *Buchstabensalat* (letter salad!) team game is also greeted with enthusiasm and involves the skills of listening comprehension and writing. A text (preferably as humorous as possible) is read aloud to the pupils, who are divided into two teams with all the letters of the alphabet on separate cards (one set for each team) spread out in front of them on tables or on the floor. The passage is then read a second time but with certain words missing which the pupils have to spell out by holding up the required letters in the correct order in front of them.

Throughout the three days pupils work intensively on a scene or sketch which they script, rehearse and then act out themselves. For this they divide themselves into groups of six or seven and have the help of an assistant. The sketch can be any theme of their own choice and, of course, is usually comical in nature. During the third day these scenes are recorded on video and the pupils then have the opportunity to watch their own acting skills and those of their peers. In addition, these videos can be taken back to school and used as recruitment aids for the following year's course.

Some time during the course is also spent on specific preparation for the oral examination. This part will obviously have to be altered this year in line with the new requirements of the GCSE, but the entire course is so geared towards oral work anyway that we do not see this as much of a problem.

As I mentioned earlier, we hold a session - usually on the second evening - in which there are several different activities going on simultaneously and pupils can choose which one they wish to do. Such a session might typically include cooking, making Christmas cards, Advent crowns, carol singing, etc. Thus as well as being immersed intensively in the target language for three days, pupils also absorb some of the culture of the country.

The success of the course, I feel, stems largely from the number and variety of activities which are organised. We have everything from very examination-orientated work through videos and films to 'sand cookery'. The important thing is, of course, that for three days we can create a mini-Germany or mini-France, and over the years our experience has been that in such an atmosphere pupils are willing and eager to speak the foreign language.

Evaluating the courses

It is doubtful if courses such as our annual trips to Burwell House will ever be regarded as an **essential** part of foreign language learning and one must be careful, therefore, not to get carried away and to make exaggerated claims for them. Even the best of courses could not, for example, compensate in three thrilling days for months and years of classroom boredom and loss of interest suffered by pupils unfortunate enough to be in the hands of an uninspired ML department devoid of all drive and enthusiasm; for it will continue to be the quality of experience within the four walls of the classroom which principally determines the skill and expertise of this country's linguists.

Of course school-based instruction produces efficient language learning and leads to examination successes. Of course inspired classroom teaching will go on motivating pupils to achieve high standards. Nevertheless, we are convinced that intensive residential courses provide a unique environment which exposes our pupils to many different and exciting aspects of learning encountered only rarely, if at all, in school. Three full days of intense concentration on the target language, which is spoken constantly - at meal times and breaks as well as during teaching/learning sessions - do more to convince students of its usefulness as a **real** means of communication used by **real** people in **real** situations than many months of classroom lessons.

In addition there is a wider educational benefit extending beyond ML acquisition to the modern curriculum as a whole. One of the aims of the GCSE is to foster pupil-centred learning, to encourage self-expression and the ability to work alone or in groups away from the direct guidance of the teacher. As has already been mentioned, a large percentage of the time is devoted to the preparation and performance for video of material devised by the pupils themselves and this initiative and inventiveness also extends across the less formal activities of the course. For example, our last evening traditionally takes the form of a couple of hours of entertainment in which groups of pupils perform sketches, etc for each other's amusement. They have an hour or so of preparation time beforehand. It was during this session - the *Bunter Abend* - of last year's German course that I had one of my most rewarding experiences in teaching to date, when a group performed an excellent parody, rhyme and all, of Wilhelm Busch's *Max und Moritz*, the film of which we had all watched and enjoyed the previous evening. No doubt they had received considerable help from a German assistant or two, but nevertheless the devising and committing to memory of such superb material, of such lively, witty, vibrant language, not to mention the obvious delight and pleasure it gave to performers and audience alike, must have been of great benefit to all concerned.

Essentials for success

For anyone seeking to initiate a similar course we would stress the importance of a number of key factors:

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- i. The excellent ratio of one teacher or assistant to five or six pupils, an enormous luxury in normal circumstances, is absolutely essential at Burwell. Only with such a generous ratio can we achieve our principal aim of creating an environment in which communication in French/German is necessary and natural and therefore as authentic as is possible outside the country.
- ii. Since the working sessions at Burwell add up to a long day, enthusiasm and stamina are required by staff and pupils alike. This, we have found, is principally achieved by the commitment everyone develops through preparing and performing the sketches to be filmed and shown on video.
- iii. While the enthusiasm and inventiveness of the pupils are often boundless, the assistants and teachers must channel these energies into realistically attainable targets which are productive of a worthwhile level of spoken French/German. This frequently involves skill and tact, though often the pupils' self-productive chain of ideas takes over beautifully. The group leader can then sit back for a moment until he/she needs to intervene, no matter how deftly, to bring the stream of creativity back on course or to inject new ideas when things flag.
- iv. Equally valuable, indeed essential in our experience, are a wide variety of language games, some of which we have referred to above, which provide necessary relief from the rather intensive central activity of working on the group sketches. Together with the marvellous meals and congenial atmosphere (*Gemütlichkeit*) provided by Burwell House, this pattern of activities means that a long day can be packed full of rewarding work without the word or idea of 'work' ever occurring to the students. Would that we had the resources to teach languages like this more often!

PEERS SCHOOL, OXFORD

Three possible patterns

Susanna Pressel

Peers School is a comprehensive Upper School in an industrial corner of Oxford. It is maintained by Oxfordshire LEA, has some ten to twelve forms of entry, about 950 students and 55 staff. All students on entry have done two years of French at Middle School. They take two foreign languages in the first year at Peers, choosing between German, Italian, Spanish (after short 'taster courses') and/or French. Some 60% opt to continue with at least one language in year 2. The school has two French assistants and one German (each for six hours per week shared with another school). The Head of Department here describes three experiments in intensive teaching, two of which have survived the harsh realities of school timetabling and established themselves while the third has had to be phased out.

Over the past six years the languages department at Peers School has run at least twenty different intensive courses. The feedback from all of these has been largely positive and we plan to go on running some such courses regularly in the future. They fall into three different categories.

The Intensive German course for beginners

Oxford has a tri-partite school system, with first schools, middle schools and upper schools. Pupils enter our school at thirteen, with three years in which to prepare for GCSE. For years we worried about the difficulty of getting our new third years up to an adequate level in German, their second foreign language, in only three years. The problem was exacerbated by shortage of time on the timetable for languages. To combat the problem, my predecessor as head of department, Mike Lyons, launched the first of our intensive German weeks in 1982. The pattern is that some of the children who are shortly to transfer to us, come into Peers for a week during the summer term, to be given a flying start in German. This has now become an annual event, except that it now lasts only three days.

RECRUITMENT

Our first task in organising such a course is to identify the 20% or 25% who are the best linguists among the pupils transferring to Peers. (The number depends on how many of the new intake we can squeeze into the two or three

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classes who will study both French and German throughout their first year at Peers). We do this partly on the recommendation of their middle school French teachers, and partly on their results in a language aptitude test which we developed at Peers. This uses simple Italian to test powers of listening, remembering, and pattern-spotting and ability to make deductions from knowledge of other languages. We send test papers and tapes to our seven or eight feeder schools and the test is administered by their French departments. Once we have marked their tests and consulted with their teachers, the best 60-80 linguists are invited to the course. No-one has ever declined the invitation.

STAFFING

The next task is to staff the course. We run it in late June or early July, by which time we have lost our Fifth year and Upper Sixth classes, so that the two or three German teachers at Peers can use that time for teaching on the course. Their normal lessons can be covered by non-German speaking colleagues in the language department. There are also enough spare classrooms at this time of year. I, as the overall organiser, have always made sure I am taken off my normal timetable for the duration of the course. One or two of the middle schools send a German-speaking teacher for part of the course. For additional staffing I am dependent on the goodwill of various contacts I have built up over the years: teachers on secondment, PGCE students who have just finished their course, the occasional school governor, local don or examination board employee. Such people are often surprisingly grateful for the chance to teach one or two lessons. If this network fails, the Modern Languages Adviser has on occasion paid for a German-speaking supply teacher to do a couple of lessons.

CONTENT

With so many different teachers it is clearly necessary to specify exactly what is to be taught in each lesson. Broadly speaking, we aim to cover the speaking parts of the first few chapters of the coursebook we are using. I therefore ask all teachers to concentrate on the skills of speaking and listening. Ideally, there should perhaps be no reading or writing of German whatsoever: there is always a marked deterioration in pronunciation when the pupils begin to read and write too soon. We use OHPs, flashcards, and tapes, borrowed where necessary from nearby schools and many of us design cue cards or grids to prompt speaking and listening activities. Very frequent use is made of games such as bingo and noughts and crosses (both of them played with words, symbols, times and prices, as well as with numbers). By the end of the course, most of the pupils can use a wide range of basic structures with considerable fluency and confidence. This stands them in good stead when they start their regular language lessons and have to struggle to make progress with only one hour 40 minutes a week.

The classes are usually quite small - fifteen or twenty pupils - and we have always been fortunate in being able to borrow three or four German assistants from nearby schools for at least part of the course. It is perhaps best to give them

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a timetable which puts all of them simultaneously into one class after another, so that they can do intensive small group work, to practise the language which has recently been learnt. They are given copies of the scheme of work and lists of suggestions, so that they can prepare appropriate activities.

We organise swimming and games in the dinner hours, which is very popular with some of the participants.

IMPORTANCE OF VARIETY

The long afternoons are broken up by special activities, for instance a video, small group work with imported Lower Sixth 'A' level Germanists, or preparing scenes in groups of two or three. These scenes are performed in front of the whole gathering during the grand finale session, where they also sing songs, fill in applications for German penfriends and complete a questionnaire on what they thought of the course. These questionnaires have mostly been extremely positive and gratifying, as has the general attitude of the pupils in lessons. In fact, the consensus view of the teachers is that this is what language teaching should be all about.

We have been fortunate in having moral and financial support from the Modern Languages Adviser and also, of course, from the school, where it was quickly recognised that the course provides an excellent induction period for at least some of the new intake. The children too welcome the chance to get to know the school and to meet pupils from other schools before their official first day at Peers.

Intensive courses using PGCE students

This second category is perhaps more in the nature of a language activities day than a true intensive course, but such days have been so enjoyable for all concerned that they deserve a brief description. We have two teacher-training establishments in Oxford which include modern languages departments, and both have brought whole classes of PGCE students to Peers for the day on several occasions. Individuals or pairs of students prepare speaking activities, games, group projects, cookery classes, keep fit classes, drama activities and other such ingenious ideas. Three or four language classes are taken off timetable for the day to enjoy these activities. An element of choice can usually be built in. Where possible, a Peers teacher is on hand to help with such things as equipment, but we can continue to teach our other classes.

When the dates are fixed far in advance, in consultation with the Heads of Department, the grumbling is minimal. Our Peers students enjoy these days tremendously and seem to learn more in those five hours than in a whole term of normal lessons. The proceedings are usually videoed, to facilitate de-briefing for the PGCE students back at the college. Any costs are met by the PGCE course. Similar days have also been organised at Peers for invited Sixth formers from all over the county. They were run along similar lines, though with a choice of topics such as the third world or the media, which the Sixth formers would work

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on for the whole day with perhaps a presentation of what they had produced at the end of the day.

Intensive course to make up for shortage of lessons time in Fourth and Fifth year

For some years we tried a timetabling expedient whereby a class of Fourth years was encouraged to continue with both French and German with one normal lesson (70 minutes) per week for each language plus a short early morning lesson. This less than satisfactory arrangement was designed to enable students to do two foreign languages and a subject such as history, geography or business studies. Such a combination is otherwise not possible at Peers. To add to this very short allocation of teaching time we were allowed to take the students off timetable for up to five days in the course of each year - two or three days for each language. Our normal classes were taken by supply teachers.

These intensive courses usually lasted one day, but occasionally two, and on the whole they aimed simply to speed up progress through the course book. To make these days more enjoyable, there were of course invited guests, 'borrowed' assistants, videos, games, plays and practical activities.

Although useful and enjoyable, these intensive days gave rise to a number of problems: other staff were not happy to have the same students repeatedly taken out of lessons, students sometimes regretted missing important lessons in subjects they might well prefer, and of course it presented language teachers with a double burden.

This experiment has now been phased out, with the unfortunate result that very few students now do two foreign languages. The major disadvantage did not lie with the intensive days. We are continuing to run at least one each year for our Fourth years in each language. The immersion they provide has a clearly beneficial effect both on language skills and on attitudes. However, a reversion to a more normal allocation of lesson time made it difficult to ask colleagues in other subjects to release pupils for several days each year.

A possible way round the difficulty would be to have a 'special subjects week' involving the whole school, on the pattern of the 'activities week' which we already hold at the end of the summer term.

This might be planned in early June, when Fifth and Upper Sixth students have left, with half-year groups spending whole days in one curriculum area after the other. The success of this, in foreign languages, would depend on how much extra teaching help could be found from outside. I hope this will be our next venture in the field of intensive language courses.

LANCASHIRE COLLEGE, CHORLEY

Diego García-Lucas
Deputy Director

At Winstanley Sixth Form College (Wigan) we have run two intensive courses for sixteen-year olds in Spanish. The courses occupied the first two weeks of September, from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm each day. The students were complete beginners in Spanish who wanted to qualify to take 'A' level. Starting from scratch they ended the two weeks with a working knowledge of the language at 'O' level standard. They then joined the 'A' level class at the Sixth Form College and continued their studies to complete the 'A' level course. There were twelve students in each course. Two tutors took turns to stay with the students at all times, including coffee and lunch breaks. Spanish was the only language spoken throughout the course.

At a comprehensive school in Leigh (Lancashire) it was decided to phase out the teaching of Russian and introduce Spanish. 35 fourteen-year olds who had been studying Russian needed to change to Spanish. We ran an intensive course of one week similar to the course described above. This took the students from zero knowledge of Spanish to the level of the Lancashire County Graded Test Level 2 which they successfully passed.

We divided the pupils into three groups. Three teachers were involved, who remained with the pupils all the time, including coffee and meal breaks. The language spoken throughout was Spanish. The experience of using Spanish, even at lunch time, acted as an incentive to other pupils at the school who were learning French to use their French during their breaks.

INTENSIVE TEACHING IN KINGSTON UPON THAMES

Johnnie Johnson
LEA Adviser for Modern Languages.

'Immersion courses' for schools in the borough began in the summer of 1981 and have been held each year since, except for 1985. In the school year 1986/87 the programme expands to three separate courses, each of one week, two for French and one for German. Each course has approximately 64 pupils from four different schools.

French course: always a mix of third year boys and girls. German course: boys and girls from third or fourth year, depending on wishes of individual schools. Each group of pupils - about sixteen each school - is accompanied by one of their language teachers. Sometimes children come from a variety of sets. For the most part pupils are selected on ability and in some schools there is great competition for places. The weakest linguists have never attended. There is a difficulty when only half of a set can be accommodated and there is no solution to this. To ensure that 30 pupils per school were accommodated would tax us enormously and two separate courses would have to be mounted simultaneously, or these would have to run over a much longer period of the term. As it is we always aim for the second half of the summer term and it involves much cooperation from Heads to ensure that we can manage three uncluttered weeks.

Of our eleven schools all have taken part except the two selective schools who have elected not to participate.

Group organisation

When the 60-odd pupils from the four schools arrive at the venue, they are divided into four mixed groups in which all schools are represented. Each group is taught by two teachers, one from the school and one from adult education.

Timetable

Each pair of teachers is responsible for a morning session and both German and French seem to select the same kind of topic; so we usually have had shopping, travel, the family, leisure, and in the course of the week each pupil goes through each of those topics, meeting each morning a different pair of teachers. The afternoons have been somewhat difficult and these have rather taxed us sometimes but we have had a series of quizzes, films and other kinds of

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activity of a less pressurised nature. The German course, incidently, paid a day visit to the German School in Richmond and they will do so again this year. The Friday afternoon is always devoted to a variety of playlets, lasting five minutes or so, in which all pupils participate. They rehearse these on the Friday morning and usually provide their own props, costumes, etc. What is remarkable is how pupils who are unknown to each other at the start of the week cooperate so unselfconsciously in this activity.

Organisation of the day

The morning begins at 9.30 am and ends about 1 o'clock. The afternoon session starts at 2 o'clock, until about 3.15 pm. In the morning there are two breaks when coffee or soft drinks are provided and these are taken when the teachers feel the group needs to break. This does seem to be very much appreciated as of course is the complete change of venue and the fact that pupils are not obliged to wear uniform.

Accommodation

Accommodation has caused us some difficulty over the years. In the first year we found spare rooms in the Teachers' Centre but later, when we developed two courses, we had to make use of rooms in Kingston College of Further Education. Last year, for the first time, we used rooms at Kingston Polytechnic.

By good accommodation I mean something which is spacious, which allows for group work for role play. There ought ideally to be at least four rooms for pupils with boards to hang posters and materials of various kinds. The shopping people always require space for their shelves for their real *Torten*, their empty wine bottles and their plastic fruit. Ideally, there should be a separate room to which the staff can repair. One year at Kingston College of Further Education staff had a support room in which they had constant hot coffee, room for their clothes, materials, etc and this was very much appreciated.

Costs

We have always been able to guarantee supply cover. Though I have tried to answer schools' needs as far as possible there is still needed a deal of goodwill. There is, of course, another reason for our putting the courses in the last half-term of the school year. We employ four adult education lecturers each week to work alongside a school teacher and they are paid the prevailing further education hourly rate. I paid out of my own budget whatever materials were required, though this was not a vast expense. We also have to pay the Polytechnic £70 per week.

Benefits

There appear to me to be three distinct benefits from the work. Pupils seem most certainly to gain a degree of confidence as language speakers as the week

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progresses. Their responses have always been very positive. Even two years later pupils refer to their week's course as having been a turning point in their attitude towards foreign language learning. Opportunities which teachers have for working together in groups and in the preparation of materials has been wholly beneficial to them. An extra advantage has been the opportunity to work alongside adult education lecturers - most of these native speakers - whose teaching style has been based on the oral approach.

BUILDING INTENSIVE DAYS INTO THE THIRD YEAR TIMETABLE

Dick Capel-Davies
Wantage School, Oxfordshire

The author describes a pilot project for integrating intensive days into the normal curriculum. It was a collaborative effort between Wantage School and Westminster College, Oxford where students read for the B.Ed degree with main language French.

Wantage School is a large eleven to eighteen mixed comprehensive school operating on three sites (with a separate Sixth form) in a market town in rural Oxfordshire. Pupils come from a large catchment area, and a wide range of backgrounds and levels of achievement are represented in the school. The modern language department comprises some ten full-time members of staff teaching French and German, with a foreign assistant for each language shared over the three sites. Since the amalgamation of three separate schools to make up the present one in 1984, there has been a concerted effort to standardise schemes of work and pool resources. At the same time, there has been a growing recognition of the fact that not all pupils' needs are being met by the department. The drop-out rate at third year options will pose serious problems for language teaching at higher levels if the trend cannot be counteracted.

Aims

The success of a wide variety of intensive learning projects is well documented in this symposium, but as several writers have pointed out, the introduction of isolated intensive days or intensive visits does not work miracles. Once the special experience is past, pupils are packed once more off to classrooms for bi- or tri-weekly doses of fragmented linguistic activity.

It was with a long-term view to establishing a programme that would integrate day-to-day language learning within a framework of regular intensive sessions that members of the modern language department of Wantage School, Oxfordshire, joined forces with a group of BEd students from Westminster College (Oxford) to pilot a first day in the programme earlier this year. Though still in its infancy, some details of the programme may be of interest to fellow teachers contemplating or involved in similar ventures.

The short-term aim was to remotivate the key third year age-group where interest was flagging and, by developing a series of days that could be integrated into the year's teaching programme, to ensure that for as many

pupils as possible class-based language 'rehearsal' would lead to some form of 'performance'. Performance could take a number of forms, e.g. dramatised scenes, simulation-type activities, field study trips abroad, etc. Since the length of these events could vary, from half a day up to (eventually) a week or more, they are referred to as 'units'.

There were other reasons for selecting the third year, where pressure on timetabled provision for languages becomes more marked, especially for double-language pupils. A review of the whole-school curriculum has meant that many subject areas are adopting modular approaches at this level, using the third year as a foundation course for GCSE. Whilst the implications of a modular approach to GCSE modern language learning are still being investigated, the potential of intensive units of varied lengths to boost or review such modules as already exist on our third year syllabus also seemed worth looking at. If the pilot scheme proved successful, the next stage would be to build in timetable provision of intensive units on a regular basis.

The longer-term aim was to extend this approach upwards, and if practicable, downwards through the school, which would of course entail a full review of language teaching time and space allocation. Since the shortcomings of the 'drip-feed' approach are generally acknowledged, the pressure to investigate radical alternatives becomes progressively greater, particularly at a time when curriculum and timetable are in the melting pot.

Design

Since the primary aim at the initial stage was to improve pupils' involvement and motivation, it seemed natural to begin with a review of pupils' needs and see how these could be tied in to existing course content, so that any unit could to some extent be prepared for and followed up using and adapting course books and resources we already had. Rather than attempt to canvass these needs in a vacuum, it seemed more fruitful to use a pilot-day to explore them, and then evaluate the feedback. But what sort of day? After a period of discussion and reading the following seven points were drawn up as guidelines for the pilot programme:

1. Any intensive days, study visits or exchange projects should be prepared for in class as part of a coherent programme.
2. Extending this, intensive days could provide a review of the term's language input in a reshaped form but not as thinly disguised revision sessions.
3. While activity days combining a miscellany of songs, language games, etc have a valuable part to play in early language learning, there should be an attempt to link up activities at this level to provide a sustained experience linked by a common theme or plot. (In the back of my mind, I was conscious of the widespread attraction of computer games based on the 'expanding labyrinth' principle.)

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4. A sense of dramatic involvement through mystery, interaction, sustained role-play, etc is important.
5. As with days abroad, a change of scenery is an important element, and this should be incorporated where possible.
6. Content should attempt to counteract the much-publicised 'gender-bias' of modern language learning in class at this age. Mixed group activities and themes of interest to both sexes should be used as far as possible.
7. Within the large-scale format, provision must be made for small-group work to ensure genuine individual participation.

Two additional constraints were that the need to speak French (the language chosen in this instance) would have to be real, and that the experience was to be sufficiently stimulating as to involve 90 pupils of differing language aptitudes and levels of commitment.

Development

It was at this point that I contacted Hugh Starkey, a senior lecturer at Westminster Teacher-Training College, who not only took up the general idea, but offered the services of four final year BEd students and a French assistant to turn the skeleton scenario into a full day's programme. The plot centred on the idea of groups of British espionage agents linking up with French resistance workers to locate a mysterious personage - Max - located somewhere in Occupied France. In an attempt to avoid stereotyping, French collaborating police replace Gestapo as the opposing force and Max, who to their surprise turns out to be a woman, is an agent of the German resistance fighting Nazism.

Without going into great detail, individuals in each group accomplish various tasks, including acquiring and memorising a false identity, undergoing interrogation (or interrogating), purchasing food in a market (their lunch!), decoding written and taped messages, buying a ticket to travel by rail, foiling an attempt to invade England and debriefing Max as to her motives.

The programme for the second version of *Operation Max* ran more or less as follows:

PROGRAMME POUR LA JOURNÉE

(Heures approximatives)

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 9h - 9h10 | Arrivée des groupes: rassemblement dans la Grande Salle à Icknield |
| 9h15 | Session plénière avec vidéo,
L'OCCUPATION; LES MOUVEMENTS PARTISANS; QUI
EST MAX? H.S.) |

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- 9h45 Division en groupes (A,B,C, et D),
PRÉPARATION DE FAUSSES IDENTITÉS;
PRÉPARATION POUR LE CAFÉ.
- 11h* INTÉRROGATOIRE DES GROUPES A, B ET C PAR LA
POLICE; ENTRÉE AU CAFÉ.

Pause choco chaud/croissant

- 11h20 MESSAGE À LA RADIO + PREP EN GROUPES + CHASSE
À TRÉSOR*
- 11h50 ACHAT DES BILLETS POUR LE VOYAGE À LA ROCHELLE
- 12h* RENDEZ-VOUS AVEC MAX À LA ROCHELLE + CASSETTE
+ DÉCHIFFREMENT DU MESSAGE
- 12h15* VOYAGE À CALAIS: L'INVASION ARRÊTÉE AU DERNIER
MOMENT

Pause déjeuner

- 13h45 Session plénière:
RÉCAPITULATION DE LA MATINÉE: DÉVOILEMENT
DE MAX ET DE SES MOBILES;
- 14h-14h45 Divisions en groupes de 8 ou 10:
IMPROVISATIONS DRAMATIQUES; RÉPÉTITION EN
GROUPES
- 14h50h* MISE EN SCÈNE DES SKETCHS
- 15h20 Session finale:
CHANSON 'Auprès de ma Blonde'
- 15h30 FIN

* décalage de phase

The first pilot day, run with middle-school pupils, concluded with a series of amusing activity-songs. The second day, outlined above and run with 90 third-year pupils at Wantage, finished with a series of improvised scenes taken from this phase in the war, which were developed by groups of eight or nine pupils.

Implementation

Much of the preparatory planning and materials creation was done by the BEd students as an integral part of their autumn term programme. Several

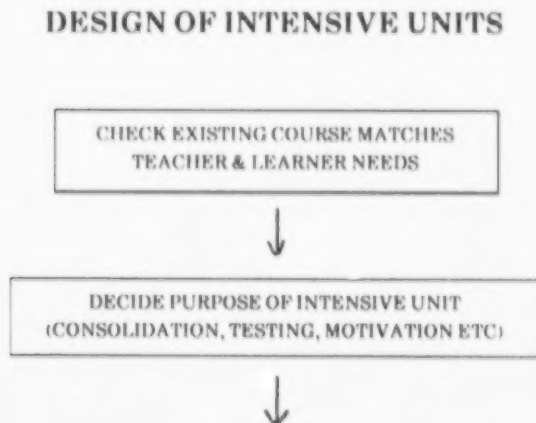
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extra items were developed for the second day, including three worksheets to be done by all third year pupils beforehand, questionnaires to evaluate pupil and *animateur* responses to this approach, and suggestions for follow-up activities. Briefing of *animateurs* for *Max 2* was greatly assisted by a twenty-minute edited video of the first day run at Westminster. The school-based version required considerable time and motion planning, not least since the whole operation, using the school hall, six rooms (two in the community education centre) and the playing fields, was run while the rest of the school followed a regular timetable. Yet, thanks to tolerance from other staff, support from two teacher-training establishments and a cool-headed and supportive deputy-head, it came off!

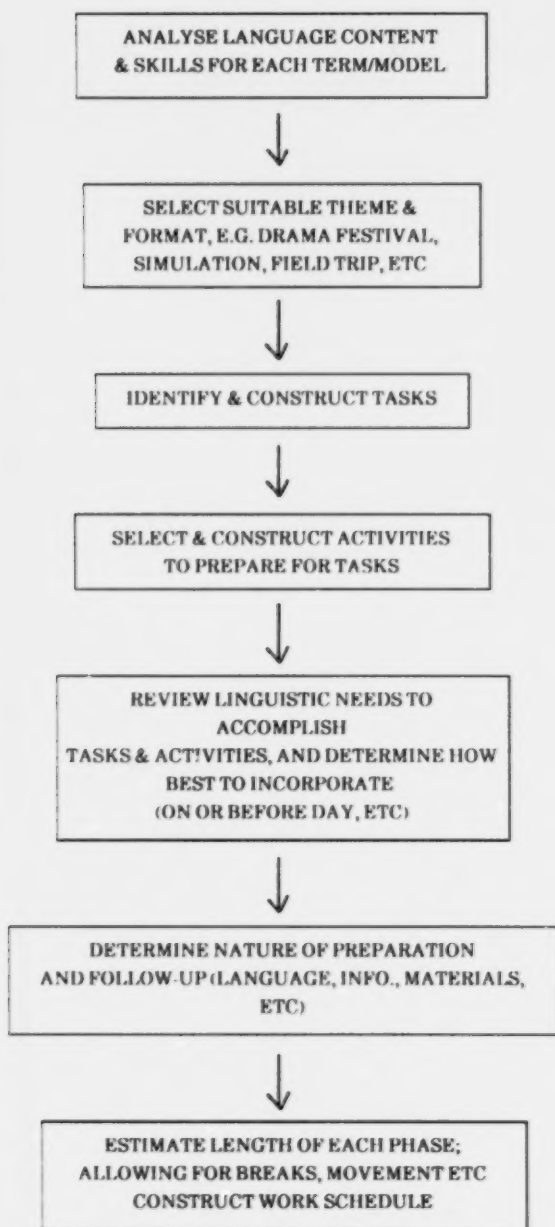
Conclusions so far

The day itself appeared to satisfy the criteria laid out in the design phase. Despite problems in synchronising the activities of four sizeable groups of pupils, *animateurs* working in pairs (frequently practising teachers working alongside trainees) managed to sustain the momentum over a five-hour period. French was used throughout, and thanks to thorough preparation before the day, few pupils complained of losing track of the storyline - and only one of being bored!

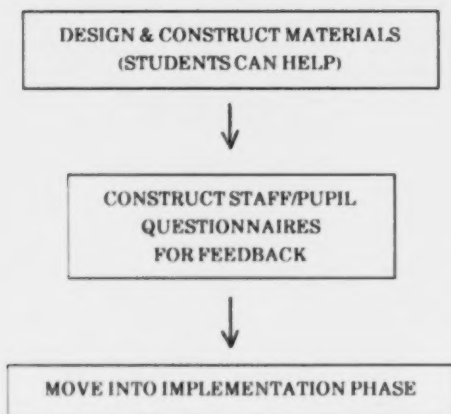
There were inevitably one or two hiccups in organising events on this scale, but the imaginative challenge provoked a very positive response from pupils and *animateurs*. The next phase of the programme will clearly determine the durability of the approach, but we have set up a working party in conjunction with a second group of student-teachers to extend the one day into a series of timetable events. In an attempt to extract a general formula for developing the programme, the following flowchart approach has proved useful:



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This step-by-step procedure is intended to allow adequate scope for converting functional/notional items and vocabulary contained in a given stage in the standard course into dramatic fictions or simulations. Stress is placed on the integrated nature of any day within the programme, and on the need for a joint school/training college approach to course development. At the same time, we feel strongly the need to move away from the single-language, single-subject approach. Lacking the resources, along with most schools, for a fully-fledged *section bilingue*, we hope to draw in the music, art and drama departments into a *Festivale gitane* that will provide a context for at least two European languages to be used in a series of set and open-ended tasks spread over a day.

The foundations for a programme have been laid, but there are still important questions to be answered. The biggest one is how to include all third year pupils in such events, once they become part of the syllabus. One possible solution seems to lie in offering a number of alternative units including study trips abroad, spread over the second and third years, with individuals selecting, say, three out of six. Alternatively, support may have to come from an external body, and it was with this in mind that a proposal for a language centre was developed.

PART FOUR: TEACHER TRAINING AND SCHOOLS IN PARTNERSHIP

In all intensive work the key to success is a generous ratio of tutors to learners. There is always a psychological barrier to use of the foreign language if the user has to 'suspend disbelief' and pretend that use of the foreign language is normal or necessary for comprehension. In a group, if English speakers outnumber foreign language speakers too obviously - especially if the English speakers are insecure and uncertain in their mastery of the foreign language - the pressure to lapse into English will be overwhelming.

But how, without going abroad, can the pupil meet competent speakers of the foreign language other than the teaching staff in school? Where are the tutors for locally based intensive sessions to be found?

There are a number of possible answers. Some schools have gone out into the catchment area and cajoled native speakers (friends, wives, lecturers at nearby colleges, even visitors to the school) to come in to the classroom to share their language competence with the pupils. This was the tactic used with success by David Cross at Archbishop Michael Ramsey School, London, to staff his regular Friday morning intensive sessions in French.

Other schools have used their Sixth form 'A' level students, many of whom have been abroad and have much to offer to younger learners.

Equally rewarding is the 'reciprocal' course, in which two matched groups of learners, one English, one (say) French, (on an exchange visit) work together under the supervision of their teachers, each participant alternating in the role of 'tutor' and learner in a process of *enseignement mutuel*. In such intensive sessions the 'language of the day' alternates, of course, either changing daily or changing (say) every two hours, to give each group of learners an equal chance to make progress. The reciprocal technique has been found to produce spectacular results with adult learners, as in the York reciprocal courses for graduate teachers. It does, however, call for considerable dedication and maturity from the learners involved and if used in school it is probably more suitable for Sixth formers (as shown by Mary Dalwood's successful courses at York) than for younger pupils.

The best answer of all to the staffing problem on intensive courses whether at local centres or abroad, is to exploit the strangely neglected resource of language graduates undergoing initial training in college or university/polytechnic. It is this exciting possibility that is opened up by the three contributions in this section.

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The gain from engaging graduate language students during their training year in intensive work with schools is by no means all one way. The gain for the schools is clearly immense. But the graduate student gains too. How else can the future teacher of foreign languages learn how to plan and conduct a successful intensive course than by taking part in such work during training?

As one of the contributors suggests, an additional reason for engaging student teachers in such work is that the intensive course helps to build bridges between the schools and the training institutions.

Several of the other contributions in our earlier sections have referred to imaginative use of students in training as tutors on school intensive sessions - good examples are Westminster College, and York University. The three contributions that follow go further. In their different ways they all set out to build intensive work into the teacher-training programme **as a necessary element, for the students' education**, and as a training in cooperation.

BUILDING BRIDGES: INTENSIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PARTNERSHIP

Geoff Lucas

Lecturer, Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds

This account concerns co-operative action. It is about building bridges between institutions to facilitate positive experiences of foreign language learning. It is not my intention here to try to vindicate the reputation of teacher training institutions - rather to highlight their potential role as 'facilitators' by outlining how the resources of such institutions, particularly human resources, may be harnessed by teachers, advisers and other partners in education in the context of intensive language teaching.

The planning and design of any bridge is crucial. Decisions taken at the planning stage are not only dependent upon the uses to which the bridge will later be put but will also affect the materials used to construct it. Consequently most bridges are different and the differences reflect variations in local needs and circumstances. Much the same is true of intensive language courses.

In what follows the focus will be upon the design and planning of two different models, the logistical problems involved and the resource implications, rather than upon questions of methodology. In each case there are similarities but also significant differences.

Model One

The first model has already been described elsewhere (Lucas 1983) and space permits only a brief outline here. Early in 1980 Trinity and All Saints' College (TASC) - a College of Higher Education involved in both IT and INSET - was approached by John Ramsdale (Adviser for Modern Languages in Leeds) as a potential source of help for a particular school initiative. The request was to plan and run an intensive beginners' course in Spanish for a group of thirteen/fourteen-year old pupils from a local comprehensive school, in collaboration with staff from the school. Formerly, the school had offered Spanish in year 3; a curriculum review now made this impossible so pupils were being asked to opt for something unknown. Hence the need for a taster course. The aims of the course were thus:

- (i) to motivate as many pupils as possible to opt for Spanish in year 4;

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- (ii) to provide a firm foundation in terms of linguistic skills and positive attitudes in those pupils who opted to continue in year 4, and - for those who don't - a worthwhile learning experience in its own right.

The course was consequently both a beginners/taster course and, because of the decision to run it over three consecutive days and aim for a degree of immersion, an intensive course. It could conceivably have been planned and run by the school itself, with the benefits remaining largely within the school. There would, however, have been considerable logistical problems for the school in embarking upon such a venture single-handed. Hence the role of a teacher training institution such as Trinity and All Saints College which was able to offer:

- * advice/guidance at the planning stage
- * a venue for the course to take place, away from the pupils' normal learning environment (with the added advantages of a certain novelty value for pupils, yet none of the disruption to the school which would have resulted from 'taking over' a room or a suite of rooms for three consecutive days)
- * manpower to staff the course in the form of PGCE students (and their tutors) enlisted to serve as teachers, who in the process provided a variety of voices, accents and teaching styles likely to prevent monotony for pupils
- * additional resources in the form of extra space, teaching aids, materials and so on (e.g. course programmes, worksheets, etc) at no cost to the school since the college regarded the benefits of this sort of experience to its own students as sufficiently great to offset costs in material terms.

Most of these points also apply to the second example (below), itself an indirect consequence of the first.

Model Two

The main difference between the two models is that the second one involved several schools, far more pupils and, consequently, many more logistical problems. It was, moreover, a very specific response to a particular local need though, like Model One, it has a high transfer value to other contexts. The schools involved were two Bradford Upper Schools where Spanish was offered to thirteen and fourteen-year old pupils on transfer from the feeder Middle Schools. As in Model One pupils were consequently being asked to opt for Spanish without any prior experience of it. The advantages of giving pupils a taste of Spanish before making their option choices are obvious. So, too, are the logistical problems. Inevitably, the practical constraints shaped the course somewhat. For example, three whole days were clearly not a viable proposition since the taster course had to be offered to the whole year group in all three Middle Schools. This would have meant freeing staff from the Upper Schools for nine whole days in the summer term. Alternatively, all the pupils from all three Middle Schools could have been taught together for just three days, but this would have involved over 200 pupils which in turn would have had tremendous

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resource implications (space and manpower particularly). The final solution was a compromise. Each Middle School was offered two half-day sessions, the second about a week after the first. It is, indeed, arguable whether such a pattern could legitimately be called 'intensive'. Certainly, as a glance at the programme shows, it is possible to get pupils to do and learn far more in two such blocks of time with appropriate teaching/learning strategies than it is when using the same allocation of time with the 'drip feed' approach. Even for such a modest experiment the additional human and material resources of an institution like TASC were vital. Since none of the Middle Schools had any staff who knew Spanish the onus fell on the Upper Schools. In real terms this meant one member of staff from each Upper School - hardly the basis for planning, resourcing and teaching six half-day intensive sessions to over 200 pupils within two weeks! The course therefore became a joint venture between both Upper Schools and TASC. The Middle Schools clearly supported the initiative. For example, they freed pupils for the required blocks of time, provided rooms and, in one case, the French teacher came along as a pupil. Direct involvement of the Middle Schools was, otherwise, limited. The decision to run the course in the Middle Schools rather than in an external centre (such as TASC) was, once again, informed by practical considerations. It was easier and cheaper to transport the (relatively) small number of teachers out to the schools than it would have been to bus the pupils to an external centre whereas the reverse was true in Model One.

Use of graduate students

The course ran for the first time in the summer term of 1986 and has just enjoyed its second year. In both cases the manpower came largely from PGCE students for whom the experience counted as their school-based project which is a course requirement in the summer term. This freed students to meet staff from the Upper Schools, plan the course together, prepare materials, teach the course and, finally, evaluate it. Staff in the Upper Schools were able to find time for such meetings by using periods when they were free from Fifth and Sixth form commitments due to public examinations. The other major expenses were for materials (including food for the topic area of 'likes/dislikes' on Day Two), and transport. These were shared between College and schools since all parties felt they had benefited equally from the experience.

It is interesting to note that the initiative for the above venture came not from the LEA but from an individual teacher. More significantly, perhaps, he was an ex-PGCE student at TASC who had been enlisted as a teacher on one of the beginners' courses outlined in Model One which, incidentally, ran for five consecutive years from 1980-1985. The fact that an ex-student should have valued the experience sufficiently to want to exploit the possibilities of intensive language teaching later in his career says something about the effects of this type of approach.

It also reveals the considerable contribution initial training institutions can make in this area; not just in the short term (by providing manpower for a particular course) but, more importantly, in the long term through a 'cascade' or

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'multiplier' effect. If all students in training were to gain first-hand experience of both the possibilities and problems of planning, implementing and evaluating intensive language courses (of whatever type), 'then within a relatively short time all LEAs and many schools would have a body of experienced enthusiasts to call upon, as and when the need arose.

It is largely for this reason that we have 'institutionalised' the experience for our own students. As part of their training course they spend some time addressing the issue of intensive language teaching, discussing what it involves, becoming acquainted with different models and - most importantly - planning such a course for themselves. It is this that I now want to consider.

Planning

Although detailed planning for a particular course can only be done in relation to known local or individual circumstances and needs, there are nevertheless a number of broad areas to focus on in planning any intensive course. As a simulation exercise in planning, our students are asked to choose a particular reason for running an intensive course and, with specific target group of learners in mind, address the following questions:

1. Aims of the course
2. Time and place
3. Length of the course
4. Staffing
5. Content (allocation of time to language skills, 'background' elements, etc)
6. Syllabus (likely topics, functions, structures to be covered and possible order)
7. Teaching methods (including comments on balance between the four language skills; presentation and practice of new teaching points; use of pair/group work, etc)
8. Teaching aids/materials (including A/V aids and other equipment; worksheets, reference notes, etc; source and selection of materials; relevance to pupils' age/interests; use of appropriate authentic materials, etc)
9. Motivation (in addition to the motivational effect of the course itself and 1-8 above, what - if any - form of extrinsic motivation would be offered to pupils?)
10. Evaluation (how would the success of the course and pupils' learning/motivation be monitored and evaluated?)

Clearly many of the above considerations are inter-related; decisions regarding availability of staff may well result in a redefinition of aims. Similarly the length of the course will inevitably affect the content and so on. It is this aspect of intensive language courses that makes planning them so fascinating and underlines the centrality of careful planning. Moreover, in the case of short intensive courses, when planning is followed by 'doing', feedback is almost instantaneous. This has been the case in both the courses outlined earlier where the simulated planning exercise was, in fact, 'for real' and theory and practice were closely integrated for students. It is this sort of benefit which partly

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explains why teacher training institutions have as much to gain from involving themselves in such courses as schools themselves.

Evaluation

The emphasis up to now has been on the design and planning of intensive courses, particularly from the logistical point of view. It is, after all, not the theory underpinning intensive methods that most people would question; evidence to date suggests the theory is sound and well-founded. But it is the practicalities of everyday constraints - time, manpower and resources - that often tip the scales in deciding whether or not to embark on such a venture. In addition, where an outlay of time, manpower and money is concerned, issues of cost-effectiveness and value-for-money are bound to come to the fore. I have tried to argue the benefits of a partnership model. In a real partnership in the business world, there would normally be a sharing of costs as well as benefits. Each of the partners would be expected to contribute as much as he or she received. Inherent in all this, of course, is the need to evaluate the experience of running intensive courses from several viewpoints: that of the pupils; the teachers/schools; the students/college, and the LEA.

PUPILS

There are two obvious measures of pupil gains and benefits, one taken during the course, the other after it. Feedback during the course is usually informal - it is the normal sort of instant feedback every teacher receives in any teaching context via pupil response, signs of concentration, involvement and so on. In my experience of over seven years of short intensive courses this feedback is invariably positive. Feedback after the course can be registered by means of short questionnaires and, ultimately, in the case of taster/beginners' courses by the continuation rate. Pupils' responses to Model One were overwhelmingly positive. Model Two, though different in design, produced the same enthusiastic response from pupils. In fact the number of pupils wishing to take up Spanish on transferring to Upper School was higher than either school could actually cater for. There is, of course, a lesson here. If one runs an intensive course one needs to be prepared for the likely consequences, including pupils' expectations.

TEACHERS/SCHOOLS

For the teachers and schools involved in intensive courses there are a number of benefits, plus some variables which will depend on such factors as whether the course is a joint venture (involving other schools and teachers, or external agencies such as a college/UDE). The experience of planning, running and evaluating such courses is obviously valuable in itself. Where this exercise is a collaborative one there are additional benefits in terms of an exchange of ideas, views, materials, etc.

Teachers who carry on where the intensive course ended have the added advantage of inheriting a keen, motivated group of learners, though it may not

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be so easy to maintain this momentum once one returns to the typical 'drip feed' approach which most school timetables favour. There may well be a case here for arguing for an allocation of blocks of time to more closely mirror the experience of the intensive course.

At the school, rather than the individual teacher/class level, benefits may include the fostering of closer inter-school links. In Model Two this involved liaison between Middle and Upper Schools as well as between both Upper Schools. In the case of Model One, where the initiative was a direct response to a curriculum review which transferred Spanish from a year 3 to a year 4 start, the benefits centered more on how to minimise the harmful effects of this change. It has recently been suggested by HMI in *Modern foreign languages to 16* (1987) that such a pattern may be necessary in the case of second foreign languages in order to help ensure a broad and balanced curriculum in years 1 to 3. Although this must be a worrying proposal to those of us concerned to expand and diversify foreign language provision in schools, it is comforting to know that something can be done to alleviate the potentially damaging effects such a course of action would entail. The time may well soon be ripe for an expansion of intensive language courses of this type.

STUDENTS AND COLLEGE

Many of the benefits to students and initial training institutions have already been acknowledged; notably, additional and different experience, not only of teaching (including team teaching) but also of planning and evaluating. Most students - even at the end of a PGCE year when they are better equipped to match the level of work to pupils' age and ability - find it hard to believe the rate of pupil progress in intensive courses compared with their 'normal' school experience on block teaching practice. For all students, the opportunity to plan and then teach on an intensive course has meant a satisfying integration of theory and practice.

For some, it has even been a definite asset in getting a job since more and more schools are exploring the possibilities of intensive courses and welcome such experience and commitment in beginning teachers.

For the college as an institution the benefits are the sum total of benefits to students plus a little more. Such support to schools is not taken for granted and college/school relationships are cemented through such collaborative action. Moreover, where tutors have been involved in jointly planning and teaching on such courses, not only does it boost their credibility in the eyes of students and teachers but it represents one small example of the sort of 'recent and relevant' experience the CATE (the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education) currently requires teacher training institutions to demonstrate.

LEAs

Benefits to LEAs are, of course, indirect. They stem mainly from the benefits which accrue to those for whom they are responsible, i.e. pupils and teachers. As a vehicle for school-based or school-focused INSET, intensive

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language courses provide a common purpose for schools and teachers to come together and jointly plan, teach and evaluate something real.

Much traditional INSET brings teachers together to exchange ideas, to plan and prepare teaching strategies and materials, but often stops short of action. 'Doing' takes place later and then often only as an individual, rather than team activity. The same is true of evaluation. Collaborative intensive language courses bring these consecutive stages more closely together as a shared set of activities and experiences.

Intensive courses may also offer LEAs a viable springboard for expansion and/or diversification of foreign language teaching within their schools, especially with staff whose linguistic skills are not being fully utilised.

Particularly where there are staff who are able and willing to teach a language other than French (if given the opportunity), there are very good reasons for offering pupils some choice of first foreign language. Short intensive taster courses provide a very cost-effective way of giving pupils a taste of a new language and thus a basis for an informed choice.

Conclusion

There are, of course, many other benefits of intensive courses not acknowledged here, some of them related to aspects of teaching method (e.g. use of the target language, maximum involvement of pupils). But questions of methodology - although important once a course has the green light - are of secondary importance until the logistical problems have been addressed.

Bridge building is not cheap. Yet in education we need more bridges - between individuals, between departments in schools, between institutions. Bridge building is, after all, what foreign languages are ultimately all about - forging links between peoples. As a profession we should be well equipped to do the job. Intensive language courses represent one additional, often under-used, resource which can make that task a little easier.

My thanks to the many individuals - teachers, tutors and students - who have been involved in the intensive courses referred to in this article; particularly to Sandra Hanna (Notre Dame High School, Leeds), Paul Fraine, (St Bedes Grammar School, Bradford) and Mike O'Brien (St Joseph's College, Bradford).

INTENSIVE DAYS FOR SCHOOLS: USING STUDENT TEACHERS AT GOLDSMITHS'

Vee Harris
Goldsmiths' College, London

Given the increasing demands made on teachers' time, the exercise of running an intensive day or weekend for their pupils can seem an additional burden in an already overcrowded schedule. Not only have the staff to be found, rooms to be booked, and pupils released from their normal timetable, but a properly structured and resourced programme of work must be devised. The problems are somewhat alleviated however if, in the course of their training, teachers have already organised for themselves some form of intensive course. This is one of the reasons why, during the last year, students on our Modern Languages PGCE course have run several intensive days at Goldsmiths' College for pupils from local comprehensive schools. Apart from familiarising students with the variety of formats such days can take, and assuming at least some of the administrative responsibilities, there are additional advantages when Colleges of Education become involved in this way. Links are strengthened with the schools in which students carry out their teaching practice and the days themselves provide a practical focus for the sessions in the course on computer games, making videos or whatever skills are necessary for their successful organisation. As for the pupils, we aim to provide them with the opportunity to become, albeit temporarily, immersed in the foreign language, consolidating the vocabulary and structures they have previously been taught but providing them with more open-ended opportunities for using them than may be easily practicable in the classroom.

Activities

The first intensive day was held for third year pupils and involved a range of activities. Students prepared the materials for and ran an information-gap activity about an imaginary holiday, a lotto game based on personal descriptions, and a group activity where pupils had to find those in their group who were born in December, had been in a plane and so on. They also made use of our extensive computer resources and ended the day by performing sketches for each other.

For the second intensive day, we tried a different approach and took the central theme of making a TV programme which might incorporate interviews with pop stars, sports quizzes and advertisements. On the initial visit to the

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school, the purpose of the day was explained to the class of second year pupils and they were shown a video made by another group of pupils. Each group decided on the content of their contribution and then spent most of the day itself preparing it with the help of the students. An additional two students were given the responsibility for videoing each item. The day ended with the class coming together to view each other's sketches and to receive certificates stating that they had taken part in the intensive day. The sketches were then edited by our audio-visual department and a follow-up visit to the school was arranged, where pupils saw the final polished product. Since, overall, we had encouraged the pupils to focus on the content of the sketches, and not just on the language required, they were then asked to discuss not only any unfamiliar vocabulary used by other groups, but also how the video itself could be improved (quality of acting, suitability of music, etc).

Balance sheet

Some modest costs are involved which have been shared between the College and the pupils. Pupils generally pay their own transport to the College and half of the cost of food, decorations, etc. This amounts to about £1.50 per pupil. The cost of the food is considerably reduced because our students prepare the dishes at home themselves.

We have not experienced difficulty in arranging for pupils to be released from their normal timetable to attend the intensive days. Planning is eased by the flexibility of these days. We can plan them so that they meet the needs of a particular class at a particular moment in their course, e.g. third years at the pre-option stage; GCSE pupils in their exam year; Sixth formers beginning to develop the skill of arguing a point coherently in the foreign language; etc.

Our students always enjoy the days and feel that they have learnt important lessons through organising them. Some of the students have difficulty in seeing that an activity like creating a video can form half a term's work, becoming a syllabus in itself. They are still tied to the notion, suggested by course books, that there has to be a 'topic', covering the banalities of bread, bus tickets and boredom! This is an issue that must be addressed if the communicative approach is to be further developed.

Clearly our early attempts at organising intensive days will need refining. Already we have managed to integrate them more fully into school programmes by devoting several weeks of classroom time to preparing sketches for the video. Initially we accepted that some pupils might express their reactions to the video in English. In future we intend to teach the foreign language expressions required when pupils react to the video as this seems an ideal, immediate kind of self expression. We also intend that this year the materials prepared by the students will form part of their continuous assessment.

Pupils comments on the intensive days have so far been broadly favourable. There have been occasional complaints: *'I didn't like the ratatouille!'* (we serve French food at lunch). Other comments, however, suggest that the pupils appreciate the freedom they are given to use what they may have learned in

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more formal classroom situations to express their own personal and often highly imaginative ideas.

It seems, also, that a visit to a university, conducted in an informal working atmosphere, may be a valuable educational experience for the pupils.

Finally, we hope that by working with the class teachers we can share ideas and learn from each other in developing new approaches to foreign language teaching.

I would like to thank the teachers at Crown Woods School, Haberdashers' Aske's Boys School and Langdon School, and the students on the 1985 and 1986 PGCE course for their help in running the Intensive Days.

(A copy of the video of both the French and German intensive days is available from the author at Goldsmiths' College. The questionnaire illustrated, p 135/6, was devised by one of the students on teaching practice at the school concerned and was used in class later in a follow-up lesson. The programme illustrated was given to pupils attending the French Day where the focus was on oral communicative games, computer games and sketches by students and pupils.)

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School of EDUCATION

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Telephone 01 692 7171

Dean A V Kelly MA

Certificat

CE CERTIFICAT A ÉTÉ DÉCERNÉ À

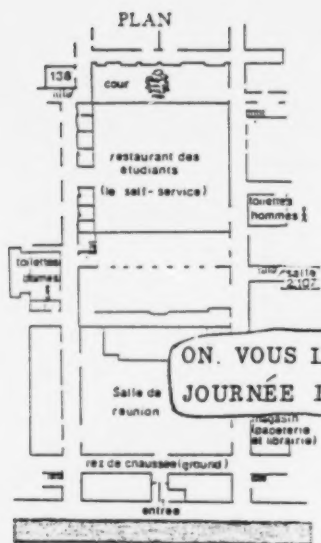
POUR SA PARTICIPATION À LA JOURNÉE FRANÇAISE DU 19 juin 1986

signé par

et

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GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE



ON VOUS INVITE À UNE
JOURNÉE INTENSIVE

Chez Nous.

Menu:-

Salon 107

Entrée:

À la carte: - pâté
réchauffé
quiche
fromage.

Deserts

Ricœur de Noël

Bon Appétit!

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is to get your opinions on the Intensive Goldsmiths' College. We would like to know what you liked and like, so that we can improve on them.

The first questions are in French, but there is a space at the end for you to add any other comments you want to make in English.

1. PUT A TICK IF YOU LIKED THESE THINGS AND IF YOU DO NOT

Les croissants

Les quiches

Le saucisson

Le salade de pommes de terre

Le salade de tomates

La tarte aux pommes

2. PUT A TICK IF YOU AGREE WITH THESE STATEMENTS AND A CROSS IF YOU DO NOT

a. Je pense que le Jeu "c'est quoi?" était:

ennuyeux

amusant

b. Je pense que la préparation des sketches était:

trop longue

trop difficile

trop ennuyeuse

utile

amusante

c. Je pense que la représentation des sketches était:

trop gênante

trop longue

amusante

d. Je pense que:

je comprends mieux le français maintenant

Je parle mieux le français maintenant

3. Add any other comments you would like to make about the day:-

PROGRAMME

PRÉSENTATION

TRAVAIL EN GROUPES

RÉCRÉATION

ORDINATEURS OU JEUX

RÉJONNER (salle 107)

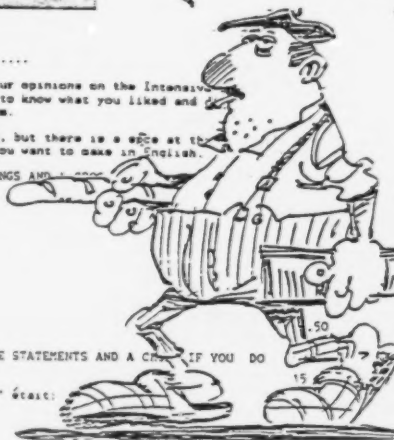
ORDINATEURS OU JEUX

SKETCH

PRÉPARATION DES SKETCHES

REPRÉSENTATIONS DES SKETCHES

FIN DE LA JOURNÉE



Certificat

CE CERTIFICAT A ÉTÉ DÉCERNÉ À

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Intensivkurs für Deutsch bei Goldsmiths' College.

Fragebogen

This questionnaire is to get your opinions about the day you spent with us at Goldsmiths' College. The first few sections are in German and there is space at the end for you to add any comments in English.

1. Put a tick by the food that you liked and a cross by the food that you did not like.

Traubensaft 

Apfelsaft 

Kekse 

Fleisch und Wurst 

Schwarzbrat (Pumpernickel) 

Kartoffelsalat 

Sauerkraut 

Quark mit Frühlingszwiebeln 

vegetarisches Gericht (Pasteten) 

Quark mit Obst 

Apfelstrudel 

 ✓	 ✗

2. Put a tick if you agree with these statements and a cross if you do not.

a) Das Spiel 'Hast du einen Hund?' war.....

langweilig   

toll 

 ✓	 ✗

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- b) **Das Namensspiel:** mit dem Ball wer...

language ☺zzzzzz

toll ☺

- 2) Die Vorbereitung für das Video (am Morgen)
war.....

zu lang

zu kurz

genau richtig



- d) Der Nachmittag beim Videoaufnehmen war...

interessant

langweilig



- e) Ich verstehe jetzt Deutsch viel besser

Ich spreche jetzt Deutsch viel besser.

Der Tag bei Goldsmiths hat mir viel Spass gemacht.

Der Tag bei Goldsmiths war langweilig und eine Zeitverschwendung.

3. Please add any other comments you would like to make about the day →

May 1967

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Results of the questionnaire.

	✓○	⊗X
Traubensaft	15	8
Apfelsaft	20	4
Kekse	22	1
Fleisch und Wurst	4	12
Schwarzbrot	3	19
Kartoffelsalat	19	4
Sauerkraut	6	14
Quark mit Frühlingszwiebeln	7	12
vegetarisches Gericht	17	4
Quark mit Obst	2	22
Apfelstrudel	15	3
'Hast du einen Hund?'	10	14
Das Namenspiel mit dem Ball	23	2

Number of pupils
in agreement.....

Die Vorbereitung für das Video am Morgen war...	
zu lang	1
zu kurz	2
genau richtig	22
Der Nachmittag beim Videoaufnehmen war...	
interessant	24
langweilig	0
Ich verstehe jetzt Deutsch viel besser.	16
Ich spreche jetzt Deutsch viel besser.	17
Der Tag bei Goldsmiths' hat mir viel Spaß gemacht.	25
Der Tag bei Goldsmiths' war langweilig und eine Zeitverschwendung.	1

There were 25 pupils in the class to answer the questionnaire.

TRAINING TEACHERS FOR INTENSIVE TEACHING: THE SHEFFIELD EXPERIENCE

Ruth Deas, Bob Pullin and John Trafford
Department of Education, Sheffield University

Background

The first school-based intensive teaching course involving Sheffield UDE's PGCE students was mounted as a joint University/Rowlinson School venture over ten years ago. It was designed to meet two very specific needs: to afford the Fourth form German beginners an enjoyable and linguistically intensive learning experience and the PGCE students an intensive, collaborative teaching experience which they could not possibly gain during a normal teaching practice. Such was the all-round benefit and enjoyment of these one-week intensive courses that the PGCE students rated them as the most valuable and memorable part of their training year and successive years of Fourth form pupils volunteered a week of their Whitsuntide holidays to participate.

In the much closer and more frequent school-university partnership which characterises teacher training to-day, there are too many school-based experiences and teaching practices to allow the one-week long intensive courses. The present Sheffield UDE PGCE Course involves all modern languages students specialising in French, German and Russian in a series of intensive days at different stages of their training. These one or two-day intensive courses have thus become a central and integral part of the one-year 36-week course. Some ten to twelve local schools are involved in hosting these courses within the framework of Language Awareness or French, German and Russian studies.

Course aims and planning are focused on the dual needs of the participating school pupils and the trainee teachers. The pupil's needs vary greatly depending on numerous differing circumstances in secondary schools in a wide inner-city and metropolitan area, including many educational priority and multi-ethnic schools. To ensure that the post-graduate students and their tutors possess as full an understanding as possible of the pupils they are to work with, the regular class teacher or head of department is involved in the planning from the outset. Where possible students visit the schools involved and see pupils in their usual classroom settings. This is followed by a briefing and planning session when a teacher from the school visits the students' methods seminar to discuss the appropriate aims, methods and course contents with the students. These sessions usually include discussion of the general aims of language study in the

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particular school and a discussion of realistic objectives for the one-day intensive course. After the school/department briefing visit, the students, in consultation with their method tutors, bear the main responsibility for producing the teaching materials.

Just as the pupils' needs vary according to circumstances and previous language-learning experiences, so do those of the postgraduate students. The students' experience of intensive courses will vary, dependent upon the particular language methods courses being followed. Those students following **two** modern languages method courses, in any combination of French, German and Russian, will experience several intensive courses in two languages in up to four schools in the course of the year. For example someone combining French with Russian can experience a French intensive course and up to **four** intensive Russian courses: a one-week intensive course for adult beginners, a one-day intensive Russian module in a first-year language awareness course in term 1, a second-year intensive Russian day within a regular Russian course in term 2, and either a Fourth year intensive Russian revision day or a Sixth form intensive Russian oral day in term 3! A student combining French with German or German with Russian will have comparable experiences.

Clearly the students are capable of teaching very differently in terms 1 and 3, since by term 3 they have had two individual teaching practices in different comprehensive schools. Nevertheless, whenever the intensive course takes place students are given the same basic guidelines:

1. To conduct as much of the lesson as possible in the foreign language to provide a *bain linguistique*.
2. To provide as varied a menu as possible of teaching methods and materials (information-gap exercises/work sheets, dramatised role-play/video materials, dialogue-interview/cassette player, comprehension/flashcards, filmstrips, etc).
3. To include background information using authentic sources.
4. To include an element of enjoyment - quiz, adapted TV game, songs, foreign food tasting, etc.

(For a fuller account of the organisation and content of a typical French intensive day, see Trafford A J 1988. For a description of the organisation of a school-based Russian day see Pullin R J 1987)

Organisation

The organisation of the days varies in detail from school to school. As releasing all the children in a particular year-group from the regular timetable already involves a great deal of in-school negotiation and administration (but something which ensures the event a high profile!) the usual school lesson

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schedule is maintained as far as possible, with paired students teaching alternate lessons and acting as rapporteur/assessor for their partner's lessons.

Period 1 (40 minutes)

10 minutes: introduction and explanation of aims/organisation for day (regular class teacher and students) 30 minutes: background talk on target country (university tutor and individual student accounts; team-teaching, using video, OHP, slides, etc).

Periods 2-7 (40 minutes each)

Paired student teachers with small pupil groups of ten to fifteen pupils doing communicative exercises on selected topics or role-play situations. Period seven devoted to revision/consolidation quiz and 10-minute preparation for performance of dialogues or song in foreign language.

Period 8 (40 minutes)

Public performance of dialogues/playlet/learned situations and/or songs in foreign language, accompanied by students (guitars) and staff. Foreign food tasting - French breakfast/Russian tea/German snack, etc.

Two contrasting models for conducting these days to quite different advantage are emerging.

In Model 1, the above organisation is operated with one group of pupils attached to the same two teachers for the whole day. This model facilitates the effective development of significant teacher-pupil personal relationships, in a very short period of time. With Model 2, four or five pairs of students are asked to prepare three activities/topics very thoroughly and both students teach the same topics in alternative periods. In this way each group of pupils experience five different teaching styles and sets of materials in one day, providing a great deal of variety, stimulus, excitement and enjoyment in language learning in an unusual way.

Language

CONTENT AND MATERIALS

The main aim of the intensive day is to provide pupils with as much practice as possible in using the spoken language. Although it is possible to include particular language structures in this kind of experience, most teachers ask us to include particular themes, topics and situations which develop oral skills useful in everyday situations and vocabulary areas from their defined content syllabuses. Consequently the students are asked to confine the lesson content to defined notional/functional topic areas which lend themselves to dramatisation including dialogue and role-play (making purchases, finding your way, obtaining tickets for travel and the theatre, expressing likes and dislikes about music, sport, TV, etc).

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With the language content loosely defined in this way, students are then paired and a series of materials-production workshops are organised using as much authentic foreign language material as possible. As they have all lived abroad before joining the course students already possess a wealth of realia additional to what the university and schools provide. This produces multi-media teaching materials which the students use for presentation and exercises. This often results in six pairs of students working with small groups of pupils in adjacent rooms all variously using video, overhead projectors, worksheets, slides/filmstrips, recorded materials and realia, with no two lessons the same. The pupils are soon captivated and unwittingly deeply involved in using spoken language through role-play, performances, dramatisation of situations, providing information in the foreign language and devising roles for performance in a simulation exercise. The enjoyment and enthusiasm generated on these occasions is unforgettable.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the intensive-day experiences is carried out jointly and individually by all the participants - the pupils, students, school teachers and university tutors, with varying degrees of formality and thoroughness. At the end of the intensive day, pupils are immediately asked by their teachers what they have enjoyed, learned and found most useful in their experience. In a later lesson pupils also fill in a short questionnaire or write an account of the day evaluating content, methods and individual activities. These evaluations are often highly perceptive in detail. Many average pupils are not only capable of general evaluation, but having praised a particular activity or use of certain materials, they will explain how the general positive effect was partly ruined by over-zealous development or too-detailed questioning by an inexperienced teacher! Overall the pupils enjoy and appreciate the variety and fun of these days. They frequently say how different the experience is compared to what they had been led to expect from their usual language-learning experiences and how much they enjoyed working very hard!

Student evaluation is extremely thorough and systematic. Much of the value of the day for the students' professional development lies in the ability to reflect upon their own performance and make future lessons more effective. They evaluate the day in three different ways.

During each lesson, when they are not team-teaching or involved in demonstrating as a pair, one student acts as observer/critic to the other and logs each teaching activity evaluating contents, methods, pupil-participation, etc, including both positive and negative comments. At this time students are asked to concentrate on teacher-effectiveness by noting successful and less successful methods and materials at each stage of the lesson. They relate pupil reaction and involvement to particular experiences, such as working solely in the foreign language, and analyse successful motivation.

At the end of lessons the students, teachers and university tutors jointly discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the day session by session, highlighting content, materials methods and how well they have achieved their

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original objectives. In a subsequent methods session at the university the students and tutor compare the pupil, student and joint school evaluations and the students write up a final description and evaluation of the intensive day, which they submit as a piece of course assessment work.

The students repeatedly claim that the intensive days are invaluable experiences both personally and professionally. In a very short period of time the student experiences various schools, types of pupil, varied teaching and educational philosophies and learns a great deal about teaching materials, methods and strategies through the joint preparation workshops and teaching experiences. It is particularly rewarding to tutors to see how quickly the students' professional awareness and personal confidence grow.

The school teachers appreciate the days from a different perspective, for many reasons:

- i. the intensive days stimulate and motivate a much broader spectrum of pupils than is possible in the usual lesson;
- ii. because of the sense of occasion which surrounds the intensive day, occupying the whole year group, the modern languages department enjoys a central high profile which it does not often enjoy in the life of the school;
- iii. the school teachers much appreciate the opportunity to work with university tutors and students in developing teaching ideas, techniques and materials.

Conclusions

The collaborative school/university intensive day clearly provides much of mutual benefit to all concerned in terms of motivation and professional development. Its use to stimulate pupils to learn a foreign language is significant - PGCE students who experience these days are obviously sensitised to their potential for future development in their schools.

We would not however suggest that the intensive day should masquerade as a panacea promising to cure all modern language-teaching ills. As we arrange these days in collaboration with local schools, involving ten to twelve postgraduate language specialists, school and university teachers and the resources that all these provide, the exercise is clearly resource-intensive in a way that few schools could replicate. Nevertheless, we feel that intensive days in large departments, or in collaboration with other schools, and with teacher-training institutions are worthy of serious consideration.

They may have a special value in motivating pupils studying the 'minority' languages.

EPILOGUE: THE WAY AHEAD

Dick Capel-Davies

The underlying paradox of intensive language teaching in our schools is that at present it can only work **despite the system**. Past experience shows that the more elaborate or ambitious the programme, frequently the more precarious it becomes. Its dependence on good-will, on individual effort, on staff continuity, on special funding, etc render it vulnerable on several counts.

Will curriculum always equal classroom?

Although day-to-day obstacles are posed by the school environment in which we work, a clearer recognition of the underlying issues still apparently needs to be fought for at the highest administrative levels within our own camp. Recent publications from the DES and HMI, while asserting that communicative competence is the main objective, still emphasise the virtually unchallenged primacy of classroom practice in reaching this goal. The draft policy statement, published by the DES and Welsh office in June 1986, outlines the need to provide languages other than French and German, whilst leaving the method of provision extremely woolly. It makes no mention, surprisingly, of the number of Welsh intensive language courses that have been springing up in mid-Glamorgan and Gwent over the past few years. Similarly, *Curriculum Matters 8 on Modern Languages to 16* makes no mention of such schemes as are described in this symposium, although on the topic of visits abroad it does recommend that

a group visit is most valuable when it is carefully prepared and when specific tasks are set which employ pupils' foreign language skills in the foreign country.

and (just in case pupils are tempted to turn up in Dijon or Düsseldorf on spec?) it stresses:

a visit abroad is likely to be of greatest value if it involves living with a family with whom contact has been previously established.

Curriculum Matters 8 sees the inclusion for all pupils to the age of 16 of a foreign language as a *logical and desirable step*. As an ideal, few would dispute such a move; yet our experience of teaching such pupils as presently **opt** for a

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modern language would suggest that were this recommendation put into practice within the school structures and teaching provision that exist at present, it would be doomed from the outset. Perspectives must change too. As long as 'curriculum' is seen to equal 'classroom', the idea that all pupils reach competence in a foreign language is as practical as the suggestion that we could have a nation of musicians by introducing compulsory instrument lessons in the lunch-hour.

The present system, structure and resources - even were they to be more efficiently harnessed - would seem to be quite inadequate.

Where are we going?

Put in simplest terms, progress can only be achieved through extending the length of contact time between learner and language and improving the quality of the language learning experience itself. If the optimum environment for our students is immersion, then clearly we should be looking at ways of making this possible, not as a fringe or marginal activity but as a central feature of at least some part of the learning programme, whether for a day, a week or a term. We do not even need to look abroad for examples of good practice. Every year thousands of foreign students of English pour into specialised 'immersion centres' set up in every major town in this country. Some of these EFL colleges are inevitably 'cowboy outfits', but most registered schools have developed techniques for exploiting materials and environment to produce successful learning in a way that we cannot afford to ignore. No-one seriously doubts how foreign languages **should** be learnt.

If schools are ever going to produce more than mediocre results for the bulk of language students, then structural reform has to be at the heart of future recommendations and developments, as it has been in countries where language learning is seen as more than a peripheral matter.

In a speech made to the AVLA in 1972, Harry Rée began: *There is something rotten in the state of language teaching. Only a major operation can effect a cure.* Among possible remedies he suggested:

- skill centres set up for intensive language teaching in schools, FE colleges, polytechnics and universities;
- 'licences to learn' given to every 10-year old to claim a place on an intensive language course;
- a wider range of languages on offer;
- incentives to attract the best teachers to run these courses.

Speaking in a similar vein at the JCLA conference at Hull in March 1987, Tim Brighouse, CEO for Oxfordshire, suggested that primary French be reintroduced, and that pupils at lower secondary age should be granted a licence to allow them a one-term exchange in a foreign country (something already done by Calday Grange Grammar School (Cheshire) Sixth form pupils in the 1960s, of course) and that time-allocation for school-based learning be radically re-examined.

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Ways forward

Whether one agrees with all the finer details of such proposals or not, the general course to follow appears to be fairly clearly mapped out. But how do we get from 'here' to 'there'?

Firstly, I would suggest that we attempt to integrate intensive language components into our school-based teaching along lines that have been outlined earlier (p 114). If this is adopted as departmental policy, and links can be made with other schools and training colleges in the area, then we are already going some considerable way towards strengthening the otherwise fragile scaffold of innovation.

Secondly, if pupils and parents receive an outline of the whole five or seven-year programme that lies ahead when they enter secondary school, they can budget for study trips, intensive courses, exchanges, etc in the knowledge that these form part of a coherent and rewarding course. Pressure can also be brought more effectively to bear on the school timetabling and staffing planners to make provision for long-term needs, such as half and whole day timetable swaps, time-in-lieu for participating staff, etc.

Thirdly, although one principal objective is to reshape time and space to some degree, the other is to review content. After pupils have learnt basic exchanges, we should scrutinise content and ideology a little more carefully than some of the GCSE boards appear to have done. Among questions we might ask of courses we offer are:

- * How far do they extend the learner **beyond** the role of consumer/tourist towards becoming a citizen of a multicultural world community?
- * How far do they encourage him or her to go beyond superficial pleasantries and begin at least to look at the real issues people face in the countries we are studying? (A German colleague recently remarked on how stunned she had been by the superficiality of our language textbooks compared to those found in German schools for the same age group.)
- * How well are we training our students to look for patterns within languages so that they can grasp the essentials of the grammatical system and go on if they wish to deepen and extend their language learning?
- * How much use are we making of the rest of the school curriculum and teaching expertise?

Finally, we should put pressure on all LEAs to consider setting up a Language Teaching and Resource Centre as part of a national network along the lines of the Leicester model described by Bernard Kavanagh (p 94) or the Cambridgeshire Centre used by Hugh Myles (p 101). The burden of generating and running courses can be shared as has been described, benefitting not only

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large numbers of students but also providing valuable in-service training for classroom teachers.

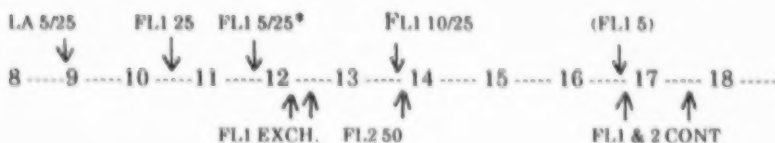
A proposal for developing an intensive language centre combining this format with the use of student-teachers (or interns) is being followed up in Oxfordshire at present. The centre was initially envisaged as an opportunity to create a 'multi-purpose' language learning and resource centre for the whole community, serving the primary and secondary groups, adult education, and the business and commercial sectors. The development of a Language for Export centre at the Oxford FE College has meant that while there may be room for partnership, the commercial sector's interests will largely be met through alternative provision.

We hope instead to pilot a small 'immersion centre' that will provide a variety of intensive courses from five to twenty-five hours in length for pupils aged 8-18. In addition to producing course materials, the centre will bring in classes of primary and secondary learners and their teachers and impart something of the special experience found in Canadian immersion centres.

To demonstrate the potential scope of such a centre the following model was put forward:

A model of FL learning 8-18, for discussion

**ALL PUPILS - LANGUAGE AWARENESS - 'WORKING TOGETHER'
SCHEMES - INTENSIVE INPUTS - MODULES (TVEI, ETC)**



KEY: LA = Language Awareness; FL1 = first foreign language; FL2 = second foreign language.
Numbers indicate length of intensives in hours; * minimum 25 hrs for pupils not in exchange.

The inputs proposed above the line that represents pupil age indicate possible 'units' for all pupils - a common programme. Those below the line allow for additional units should pupils show sufficient aptitude or motivation, for example to go on an exchange at the end of year 3 and then wish to participate in a two-week booster course in a second foreign language at the end of the summer term. Such a course could be self-contained, with a certificate at the end, as has been done for secondary pupils at the Lancashire Adult Education Centre.

The common programme takes advantage of the more flexible curriculum at primary level. Units begin with basic language awareness courses lasting one day, but allow for the possibility of pupils opting for a full week's immersion in a

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foreign language prior to entering secondary schooling. Later on, in year 2, 3 or 4, the pupil returns for another intensive day, or perhaps longer for a *section bilingue* style French/geography or German/social studies course, etc. At Fifth and Sixth form level the centre would offer full-scale simulations on much the same lines as those developed by the Leicester Europe Resource Centre.

It is stressed that the proposal outlined here is intended for discussion. Clearly, course planning will have to take account of resources and teaching provision on the one hand, and respond to school and pupil needs on the other. Care must be taken to ensure that discrepancies in language provision between schools and within schools are not exaggerated but evened out. But how can one staff and fund such an institution in these lean years?

Staffing

Looking at the few county language centres that do exist to serve this level of learning, the most successful structure would appear to be that of a permanently appointed co-ordinator who operates at the centre of a teaching pool. The pool is composed of experienced teachers on one-term or one-year secondment who contribute a part of their seconded time, supplemented by assistants, student-teachers, lecturers and practising teachers who come in with their classes. In addition, there is ample scope for asking non-teaching or part-time teachers to contribute to selected units, for example setting up awareness days in non-European languages. Perhaps, too, there would be scope to revive 'reciprocal' language courses as pioneered at York University in the 1970s (cf. p 121). Course development would be spread over a number of years, responding selectively to supply and demand. It is assumed that the teaching pool would develop alongside this.

Funding

The first point is that the initial outlay for such a venture need not be very great. Existing premises in the form of vacant primary schools can be equipped at relatively little expense. Similarly running costs, using the staffing structure outlined above, are largely offset by re-allocating existing provision, with the exception of the co-ordinator.

Secondly, those courses which constitute part of regular language provision should receive financial support from school INSET funds and central government as well as the LEA itself. Where special or supplementary courses are provided, costs may be met from a number of sources including parents, local enterprise, sponsorship.

Thirdly, if the centre is a properly equipped language teaching institution, it is in a strong position to generate its own income from commercial courses run in the evenings or school vacations to maximise the use of the premises and equipment.

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Conclusion

If I have concentrated on one sector of intensive language learning while apparently ignoring other areas of experiment, it is not because the latter are any less significant or worthwhile for participants. The opposite may well be the case. The *section bilingue*, for example, is exciting because it shows that bilingual instruction really can work for pupils of widely differing levels of linguistic aptitude. A 'work shadowing' experiment set up by the Oxfordshire TVET Centre earlier this year, in which fifteen Lower Sixth pupils (who, incidentally, were no longer 'language students') were found placements to work alongside French restaurateurs, shop assistants and other tradespeople in Dieppe, opens up a new arena for small projects.

Such ventures will and should continue to equip groups of fortunate students with confidence and competence in a foreign language. But provision, too, must be made for the great majority of pupils who cannot be embraced by such schemes. We need, moreover, in each region a structure that helps to rationalise the enormous duplication of effort and planning that goes into staging any intensive course run by individual schools, and which can on occasion offer intensive learning experiences in a specialised environment.

It may well be that the model for an LEA Centre proposed here will undergo revisions before it becomes fact. The evidence from those few authorities with the foresight to have already moved in this direction is that Language Centres have to respond to various constraints, physical and financial, but continue to survive thanks to sheer professional commitment coupled with the evident satisfaction of a real need. The path is there; who amongst us would not wish to follow?

APPENDIX A

INTENSIVE LESSONS FROM THE PAST

The following examples of intensive teaching from the past are extracted from the 1978 edition of this book.

i. Mackey (1965) has pointed out that in Roman times 'immersion' in the foreign language was the rule. The prestigious foreign language, Greek, was learnt in the home by well-born Roman children in dialogue (at meal times, in the nursery and schoolroom, etc) with an educated Greek slave/tutor, who, having served the family well, was rewarded on his retirement by the gift of his freedom and Roman citizenship.

ii. Montaigne describes (*De l'Institution des Enfants* 1580) how he and his brothers were compelled by an enlightened father to use only Latin in the nursery: *nor man nor maid-servant were suffered to speak one word in my company except such Latin words as everyone had learned to chat and prattle with me.*

iii. In 1573 schoolboys at Southampton Grammar School, under Adrian à Saravia (one of many refugees from Europe who provided Tudor England with language teaching skills) acquired a sound knowledge of spoken French because any use of English, even outside the classroom, was punished: *He who spoke English, though only a sentence, was obliged to wear a fool's cap at meals and stand aside and watch the rest eat.*

iv. In the Tudor Grammar School...*boys were not taught Latin, they were taught in Latin; they were not allowed to utter a single vernacular word whilst in school... If Shakespeare crept unwillingly to school he did so because there he would be confronted by a Master who spoke nothing but Latin and would birch him if he spoke an English word to another boy*

(Goldsmith 1950 quoted in Charlton 1965 p.119). It is true, as Charlton (1965) argues, that the difficulties of implementing the Royal Charters which insisted on such draconian measures, must have been considerable.

Already at the beginning of the 15th century English was used in grammatical texts... the prohibition of English speaking in Tudor school

Intensive lessons from the past

statutes must be put in context and interpreted as referring to those hours of school life devoted to the speaking of Latin and not as an absolute prohibition.

v. Experiment in intensive teaching began soon after modern languages re-entered the curriculum in the 19th century. The editor of *Review of Reviews*, the famous journalist W T Stead, had written a laudatory article about François Gouin's *L'Art d'enseigner* (translated into English by V Bétis and H Swann in 1892). He was so impressed by Gouin's method that he proposed his own four children as 'guinea-pigs'. The experiment is described in Gilbert M (1953,4,5). The children were taught by Bétis for up to two hours per day for six months and then subjected to rigorous tests by a committee of experts. They had to repeat a story in French, read an article from a newspaper and re-tell it in French, explain a number of pictures in French, act as interpreter, and repeat in French a conversation conducted by persons present. The children acquitted themselves well in all the tests.

vi. During the Second World War the urgent need for speakers of, for example, Russian and Japanese in both the USA and UK prompted a great leap forward in intensive techniques. In the UK while National Service lasted (until 1959) the intensive Russian courses turned out a succession of highly qualified Russian linguists many of whom made their mark later in school and university Russian departments. Similar intensive techniques were later used in the USA to train speakers of Vietnamese.

vii. Crash courses for commercial purposes were set up by Mabel Sculthorp at Ealing College in the late 1950s using the first 'language laboratory' to be installed in the UK. In the mid 1960s Trudie Berger began her experiments in the Language Teaching Centre, York University in teaching Italian from scratch by intensive, all-day immersion, getting all her large class (of some 40 graduate students) up to GCE 'O' level in some 80 hours, covering in little more than two weeks the ground normally covered in schools in five years.

viii. Calday Grange Grammar School (a maintained school in Cheshire) experimented in the early 1960s with a new pattern of Sixth form preparation for GCE 'A' level. Pupils taking French, German and history as their three principle subjects, spent one term, of their lower Sixth year, in a German *Gymnasium* (living with a German family) and another term in a French *Lycée* (living in the Internat). In the third term they spent extra time on their third subject, history. While in Germany and France they prepared essay questions by discussing them with the history specialists in *Gymnasium* and *Lycée*, before writing their answers to send home to their own history teacher. This lower Sixth year proved to be a first-rate preparation for distinguished work in the upper Sixth as well as widening horizons by introducing able pupils to the contrasting teaching traditions and values of *Lycée* and *Gymnasium*.

Intensive lessons from the past

ix. Ann King described the setting up of a *section bilingue* in an English comprehensive school in cooperation with a French *Lycée* which established its own English medium section:

The section bilingue at Haygrove Comprehensive School, Bridgwater, began in 1973 and was promoted at the invitation of the Inspectorate and the Somerset LEA. Its primary objective was to ascertain what could be the effectiveness in this country of a project already established between France and Germany. The following extract from a minute issued by the Académie de Nantes will show what the French understand by classes bilingues:

'L'expérience des classes de Sixième bilingues a pour but d'entraîner de façon intensive les élèves à la pratique de la langue étrangère...

La formule des classes bilingues a été lancée d'abord par les germanistes.

La formule comporte trois heures de cours d'anglais par semaine, et deux heures de travaux dirigés. L'assistant peut être présent aux cours et aux travaux dirigés d'anglais et y participer; de plus, il participe à l'enseignement d'une autre matière choisie selon sa compétence: Education musicale, Education physique, Travaux manuels éducatifs, Education artistique'.

In this Académie, the project begins in the first year of secondary education; the pupils undergo an intensified programme of teaching in the target language; in addition to the normal allocation of lessons in the target language, the pupils are taught some other subject in that language; the foreign assistant is in charge of the teaching of this other subject; the choice of this subject is determined by the interests and qualifications of the assistant. It is obvious that the success of such a scheme depends very much on the quality of the foreign assistant, and, unless he/she is willing to spend several years in the same school, no on-going programme can be planned, since the matière choisie selon sa compétence is likely to change from assistant to assistant. Furthermore, the recommended subjects - music, PE, crafts, or (as is stated elsewhere) - une initiation un peu folklorique à la cuisine, would not perhaps lend academic respectability to the project in the eyes of colleagues, parents and pupils, nor would such subjects provide a sufficiently meaty syllabus to stimulate and discipline the teacher of the project.

It is easier for us in this country to make changes in the curriculum, and at Haygrove we were able to follow the example of the Mill Hill project (see p 52) and choose academic subjects, geography and history, to be studied through French. Moreover, our link school in Le Mans was able to choose history and geography as subjects to be studied through the medium of the English language when it set up its Sixième bilingue in 1974.

(On the development of sections internationales in French schools see our note on p 43).

APPENDIX B

SOURCES AND USEFUL ADDRESSES

The Central Bureau, Seymour House, Seymour Mews, Wigmore Street, London W1H 9PE

Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, Regent's College Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London NW1 4NS

French Institute, 15 Queensbury Place, London SW7

Documentation Pédagogique, French Embassy, 22 Wilton Crescent, London SW1

Goethe Institute, 50 Prince's Gate, Exhibition Road, London SW7 2PH.

Hispanic and Luso Brazilian Council, Education Dept., Canning House, 2 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8PJ

Documentation française, 29 Quai Voltaire, Paris

Documentation Photographique (annual subscription) French Embassy Service Culturel (see above)

Renouveau Association: 2 Rue Trésorerie, 73023 Chambéry Cedex, France
aims: *développement; détente; distraction*

maintains a network of vacation centres for recreation, sporting activities and study for all ages at attractive rates. Specialises in *accueil des classes de découverte, connaissance du milieu* etc. publishes quarterly Review in full colour describing its varied activities.

ALL: Association for Active Learning. Founded by David Rowlands: Rue Porte Pinche, 46600 Martel, France (Tel: 65-37.38.20)

Works closely with RENOUVEAU. Organises activities for 'active learning' including language learning, environmental studies, arts, music, in attractive centres in France and UK.

Sources and useful addresses

FOR FILMS

Connoisseur Films Ltd., 58 Wardour Street, London W1

Contemporary Films Ltd., 55 Greek Street, London W1B 6DB

Catalogue of French 16mm films from French Institute (above)

German Film Catalogue, Viscom Ltd., 6/7 Great Chapel St., London W1V 3AG

Short films (*Fête à Coutances*, *Dax*, *Entrechaux*) for sale or hire from Mary Glasgow Publications Ltd., 140-142 Kensington Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks.

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George, P. (1970). *Dictionnaire de géographie*. Presses Universitaires de France.

Unesco. (1966). *L'Enseignement de la géographie*. Hachette.

Prévot, V, Boichard, J and Stifflet, A M. (1963). *La France, géographie 3e cycle* (plus excellent teacher's notes). Belin.

Also slides which supplement this series:

Géographie physique de la France (14 sets). Diapofilm.

Géographie économique et humaine de la France (6 sets). Diapofilm.

Valette, P, Personne, E and Le Chaussée, B. (1963). *Ma géographie en couleurs*. Nathan.

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An increased emphasis on the importance of oral and aural skills has been the hallmark of recent developments in language teaching. This is reflected both in new GCSE courses and in public statements on modern languages, from HM Inspectorate and the Government alike.

Timetable restrictions and the constant pressure on pupils to use English during the normal school day militate against meaningful use of the foreign language for pupils' own purposes. With the proposal to delay the start of a second language to 14 it is more important than ever to encourage such meaningful language use.

Intensive language teaching is clearly one such means of support and in this new edition Professor Eric Hawkins has assembled a collection of stimulating articles covering intensive courses abroad as well as at local centres, *sections bilingues* and 'immersion' learning and the role of intensive courses in teacher training.

Intensive Language Teaching and Learning draws these strands together, considers lessons from the past and takes a positive look at the way in which the intensive approach can both supplement and complement language learning in the future.

Professor Eric Hawkins CBE, Commandeur des Palmes Académiques, retired as Director of the Language Teaching Centre, York University, in 1979 and was elected the University's first emeritus professor. He also holds an honorary chair in the Language Centre, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. He is the author of *Modern Languages in the Curriculum and Awareness of Language - An Introduction*.

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